Ontario

Office of the French Language Services Commissioner

Investigation Report

The State of French-Language Postsecondary Education in Central-Southwestern Ontario: *No access, no future*

June 2012

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SUMMARY

Language is more than a mere means of communication; it is part and parcel of the identity and culture of the people speaking it. It is the means by which individuals understand themselves and the world around them.

— Chief Justice Brian Dickson[1]

Ontario boasts a strong and reputable postsecondary education system composed of 44 publicly assisted institutions.[2] There are 20 publicly assisted universities and 24 publicly assisted colleges of applied arts and technology (colleges).[3] Several of the 44 institutions have multiple sites in addition to their main campuses. For instance, York University offers programs at Glendon College, and the University of Toronto has sites in Scarborough and Mississauga.

For many wishing to pursue higher education in the province, a world of possibilities and opportunities awaits, from learning practical skills through programs like the culinary arts program at *Collège Boréal* or animation at Algonquin College, to studying equine bio-resource management at Kemptville College, medicine at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, computer science at the University of Waterloo, or engineering at the University of Toronto.

For Francophones living in Central-Southwestern Ontario, however, it is a very different story. Indeed, the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner has received several complaints about the lack of French-language postsecondary options in the Central-Southwestern region of the province. There are just five French-language colleges and bilingual universities located in this region offering but a handful of postsecondary programs, which translates to a rate of access to French-language postsecondary education ranging from 0% in the Southwest region of Ontario to 3%[4] in the Centre, in comparison with the proportion of programs offered in English.[5]

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[1] *Mahé* v. *Alberta*, [1990] 1 S.C.R. 342, par. 32.

[2] For more information on the 44 institutions: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/schoolsprograms (page consulted in June 2012).

[3] Other publicly assisted postsecondary education institutions not listed above include Dominican College, the *Collège de Hearst*, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and the Michener Institute.

[4] In 2008, the French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch conducted a gap analysis at the program level (access to individual courses offered was not examined) using the

This is shaped by a number of factors, including the need for a better understanding of the mechanics of supply and demand in a linguistic minority setting, and how this is tied to proximity of schools, retention and recruitment of students and a lack of data. It is also crucial to consider the importance of governance for Francophones by Francophones in addressing the shortage of current French-language postsecondary schools and devising solutions for the future. The shortage of French-language postsecondary institutions has an impact on students, the community and the government.

This situation begs the following question: Why aren't there more postsecondary programs in French available in the Central-Southwestern region? The answer is straightforward: because there are very few programs available and efforts made by colleges and university faculties to promote them, where they exist, they are perceived by potential students as being too few and far between.

One could then ask a follow-up question. What is the impact of this almost non-existent offer of postsecondary programs in French? The answer is rather simple: *No access, no future.* In other words, for the Francophone community, it is slow death. And for society as a whole, it is an incredibly sad missed opportunity.

This is simply and utterly unacceptable. And the situation is nothing new. Indeed, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (the Ministry) has been aware of this lack of programs and services in Central-Southwestern Ontario since the time of the Rae Report. The Commissioner believes this situation has existed for far too long and that action is urgently needed.

The following report presents an analysis of the state of French-language postsecondary education in Central-Southwestern Ontario and recommends a number of key steps that should be taken by the government to begin to address this issue.

Common University Data Ontario (CUDO) database catalogue of programs for universities and a Ministry master list catalogue for college programs. The access rate for the different program categories for each region was calculated by language group to measure the availability of programs offered in French.

[5] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

In light of the fact that postsecondary education attracts a broad range of students, the Commissioner recommends that the government take the necessary steps to shift away from the current method of data collection based on an incomplete understanding of French-language education centred only on rights-holders, as it applies in the context of elementary and secondary schools, to include those who could potentially pursue French-language postsecondary studies in Ontario. This includes going beyond gathering data on French-language high school students, to include immersion students, those who belong to exogamous and allophone households, as well as Francophiles.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Commissioner recommends that the government use the Ontario Education Number (OEN), linked with linguistics variables, throughout students' academic life, from early learning to postsecondary and beyond. The OEN should also be amended to include language-based questions. This should preferably be based on multiple questions or indicators, rather than a single-factor indicator (e.g., language of instruction OR language of communication OR mother tongue...).

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The Commissioner recommends that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities creates, by March 31, 2013, a new secretariat or a similar structure to identify the need for postsecondary programs and services for the Franco-Ontarian population in Central-Southwestern Ontario, especially in the Greater Toronto Area.

The Commissioner further recommends that this new structure have the ability to negotiate with postsecondary institutions in order to facilitate the implementation of new programs and services for the Franco-Ontario population in the Central-Southwestern region, beginning with new programs and services in the Greater Toronto Area.

Furthermore, the Commissioner recommends that this new structure include representation from the following non-exhaustive list:

- ***Professionals in the education domain***
- ***Administrators in education sector***
- ***School board professionals or administrators***
- ***Community organizations and members of the public***
- ***Students***
- ***University and college administrators or professionals***
- ***Chambers of commerce and other business leaders***
- ***Public officials from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities***

RECOMMENDATION 4:

The Commissioner recommends that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities take all necessary measures, by March 31, 2013, in order to negotiate with York University greater autonomy for Glendon College, so that this university campus could serve as a potential base for new postsecondary programs and services aimed at the Franco-Ontarian population of the Central-Southwestern region.

CHAPTER 1 – THE INVESTIGATION

The Commissioner's Office received several complaints regarding access to and quality of French-language postsecondary education. Complainants contend that there is a lack of colleges of applied arts and technology (colleges) and universities offering French-language programs and services in Central-Southwestern Ontario. They also allege that the few French-language postsecondary institutions that are located in the region offer such a limited set of programs and services that it is difficult for them to compete with the highly reputable and established English-language institutions that offer a wide range of elaborate programs and services.

The complainants suggest that this lack of access and lesser quality of French-language higher education in Central-Southwestern Ontario fails students interested in pursuing studies in French beyond high school. Furthermore, complainants assert that the lack of French-language postsecondary education in the region reduces the pool of potential future French and bilingual professionals that would not only contribute to Ontario's economy, but also help fill the enduring gaps in French-language services due to the lack of professionals that are proficient in French. In this sense, the complainants wish to underscore the serious consequences that the shortage of French-language postsecondary institutions and programs has for the vitality and enhancement of Ontario's French linguistic minority.

In light of these complaints, the Commissioner's Office launched a formal investigation into the issue of the lack of French-language services in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

1.1 THE COMMISSIONER'S JURISDICTION

Under the *French Language Services Act* (FLSA), the Commissioner's Office is charged with conducting independent investigations, either following a complaint or on its own initiative. It is also responsible for preparing reports on its investigations and monitoring progress by government agencies in the delivery of French-language services in Ontario.[6]

Given the leadership role that the Ministry plays in the provision of French-language postsecondary education in Ontario, the Commissioner chose to

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[6] *French Language Services Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. F.32.

exercise the authority granted under the FLSA and initiated a formal investigation into the matter.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of this investigation, the Commissioner's Office collected information by communicating with complainants and liaising with stakeholders and representatives of the Ministry in person, by phone and by email. The Commissioner's Office also conducted an extensive literature review, collecting data from sources ranging from academic journals and books to gray materials such as policies and reports.

On January 12, 2011, the Commissioner's Office shared its intent to pursue an investigation on the lack of French-language postsecondary options in Central-Southwestern Ontario with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. On December 16, 2011, the Ministry responded to the Commissioner's preliminary questions, issued on September 22, 2011. Disclosure of a list of documents was also requested from the Ministry by the Commissioner's Office. This investigation report is the result of the Commissioner's careful consideration and analysis of the issue, in light of the Ministry's response and relevant materials.

The level of cooperation demonstrated by the Ministry throughout this investigation is worthy of praise.

1.3 LEGAL, REGULATORY AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The *French Language Services Act*[7]

The preamble to the *French Language Services Act* recognizes the seminal importance of education to the province's linguistic minority. It states: "*... the French language is a historic and honoured language in Ontario and recognized by the Constitution as an official language in Canada; and whereas in Ontario the French language is recognized as an official language in the courts and in education; and whereas the Legislative Assembly recognizes the contribution of the cultural heritage of the French-speaking population and wishes to preserve it for future generations.*"

Mandate of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities[8]

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[7] *Ibid.*

Among other things, the mandate of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities includes:

Directing and shaping Ontario's postsecondary education, employment and training systems. It provides operating and capital funding to publicly assisted colleges and universities, establishes provincial objectives for the use of public funds and designs frameworks for achieving these objectives. The Ministry ensures that high quality postsecondary education is accessible to all qualified candidates through tuition regulation, capital investments, student assistance, targeted funding and accountability mechanisms.[9]

In addition, the Ministry has stated that its key strategies and priorities are as follows:

"Ontario's edge — its competitive edge — is its people. The province is at its best when people have opportunities and tools to reach their full potential. In today's knowledge-based economy, education and skills are essential to individual success and are the cornerstones for the future growth and prosperity of the province. That's why the government continues to make education and training its highest priority. [...] Among other things, we will increase Ontario's postsecondary education attainment rate to 70%, [...] and make sure that every qualified Ontarian who wants to go to college or university will find a place."[10]

Speech from the Throne 2011

And in his most recent Throne Speech, the Lieutenant Governor announced:

"We know that 70% of all new jobs in the global economy will require postsecondary education and training. So your government is creating 60,000 new spaces in our colleges and universities to ensure that every qualified Ontario student who wants to go to college or university can do so. [...] To ensure more students in more communities across Ontario have access to quality learning, closer to home, your government will move forward with the selection of three sites for new undergraduate campuses."[11]

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[8] For more information: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/annualreport (page consulted in June 2012).
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] Available online: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/about/annualreport/1011/ (page consulted in June 2012).
[11] Available online: https://www.premier.gov.on.ca/news/event.php?ItemID=19626&Lang=EN (page consulted in June 2012).

Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act[12]

- Section 2(1): unlike universities, which operate under their own charters, Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology can be established through regulation.

- Section 5(1): deals with general provincial intervention into the affairs of a college or a subsidiary of a college; section 5(2) addresses 'public interest' cases for intervention, such as for the administration of a college, in its utilization of financial resources for the management and delivery of core educational and training services, accessibility to, and quality of, education and training.

- Section 8(1): deals with regulations made by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, including the management and administration of colleges and their councils, the creation, expansion, amalgamation or closing of colleges, as well as for "respecting the languages of instruction, including authorizing specified colleges to offer any or all of their programs in the French language and excluding others from doing so" (s. 8(1)(f)).

The *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act*[13]

This law governs degree granting and the use of the term "university" in Ontario. It requires organizations wishing to advertise and/or offer a program or part of a program leading to a degree, or to be known as a university, to have either:

- the consent of the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities; or
- an Act of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

This act establishes the composition and authority of the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB). PEQAB is responsible for reviewing applications for consent and making recommendations to the Minister on the quality of programs and organizational soundness.

Moreover, Ontario Regulation 279/02 made under the act defines public and private organizations for the purposes of the act, financial protection of student tuition and transcripts, and the procedures for ministerial decisions, orders and appeals concerning amendments to consents, suspensions, revocations, cancellations, and reinstatements.[14]

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[12] *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act*, 2002, S.O. 2002, c. 8, Schedule F.
[13] *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act*, 2000,S.O. 2000, c. 36, Schedule.
[14] For more information: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/programs/degreeauthority/legislation.html (page consulted in June 2012).

The *Education Act*[15]

Although this report focuses on postsecondary education, it highlights the impact on other parts of the education continuum, namely the interdependence between colleges, universities and the primary and secondary education level.

The *Education Act* governs the administration of Ontario's publicly funded primary and secondary education system. It specifies that the purpose of education is "to provide students with the opportunity to realize their potential and develop into highly skilled, knowledgeable, caring citizens who contribute to their society," and sets out the roles and responsibilities of education partners, such as the Minister and the boards.

The Putting Students First Strategy (2011)[16]

The government's multi-year plan, building on the 2005 *Reaching Higher Plan*, aims to "ensure a sustainable postsecondary system strategically aligned with the needs of students and of Ontario's economy in the years ahead."[17]

This strategy includes several objectives that should benefit Francophones, including an increase in student spaces at colleges and universities (60,000 additional spaces), extended access to opportunities funding to help Francophones succeed in postsecondary education, the provision of funding for more graduate spaces, the modernization of funding formulae and the creation of new accountability relationships.

This initiative specifically identifies Francophone students as a target group and states its intention to provide extra support and encouragement to such an underrepresented group.[18]

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[15] *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2.
[16] For more information: http://www.moi.gov.on.ca/en/infrastructure/building_together/section_two.asp (page consulted in June 2012).
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] Available online: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/speech_may.html (page consulted in June 2012).

***Politique d'Aménagement Linguistique (PAL)* 2011** [19]

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities recently released a *PAL* relating specifically to French-language postsecondary education and training that forms a part of its *Putting Students First* initiative. The *PAL* deals with the following six key strategic areas:

1. Access to French-language programs
2. Student support and success
3. Quality enhancement
4. System promotion and targeted recruitment
5. Partnerships and collaborations
6. Governance

This policy aims to "ensure that all qualified Ontario students have access to high-quality, affordable training and education to help them succeed in the world today — including to support Francophone students who want to study in French".[20]

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[19] Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, *Politique d'Aménagement Linguistique (PAL): A Policy Framework for French-Language Postsecondary Education and Training in Ontario*, Toronto, 2011. Available online: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/pepg/publications/PAL_Eng_Web.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).

[20] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2 – DEFINING THE PROBLEM

2.1 THE FRENCH-LANGUAGE POSTSECONDARY DEBATE

The sustainability of the Franco-Ontarian culture and the Franco-Ontarian community rests on the preservation of the French language. It is therefore not surprising that, for as long as they have been in Ontario, securing and protecting French-language education has been an unflinching preoccupation for Francophones. While this has been particularly well documented as it applies to the development of French-language education at the primary and secondary level, a debate has also raged over time about the fate of French-language postsecondary education in Ontario. This debate has often taken place in the Northern and Eastern parts of the province, where the close proximity to the Quebec border, the location of the national capital, and a boom in certain industries such as mining contributed to an early concentration of Francophone residents.

A prime example of this can be found in the evolution of the University of Ottawa. Its predecessor, Bytown College, founded in 1848 by the French Bishop, Monseigneur Joseph-Bruno Guigues, offered classes in French in the morning and English in the afternoon. As far back as 1848, language proved to be a point of contention, beginning with a period of 'difficult coexistence' from 1848 to 1889 and eventually reaching a more 'equitable coexistence' after 1965, when it was declared that the preservation and development of French culture in Ontario was central to the University's object and purpose.[21] And in 1987, the year following the introduction of the *French Language Services Act,* the University of Ottawa requested full designation pursuant to the act.[22] This move was met with a great deal of opposition politically, including by certain factions within the Francophone community that felt that supporting a *bilingual* institution would hurt their special cause: the creation of a uniquely *Francophone* university in Ontario.[23] Thus, designation was not achieved. Then, 20 years later, in 2007, the University's Task Force on Programs and Services in French, a body that had been

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[21] Task Force on Programs and Services in French, *French at the University of Ottawa, Volume II: State of Affairs for Programs and Services in French*, Ottawa, University of Ottawa, 2006.

[22] A distinction should be made between *full* designation, in which an entire institution or entity is subject to designation, and *partial* designation, in which only part of an institution or entity has the obligation to offer a certain level and quality of French-language services (FLS).

[23] Roger Guindon, *Coexistence équitable: La dualité linguistique à l'Université d'Ottawa: Volume 4 : Depuis 1965*, Ottawa, Les Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1998. See also, Philippe Orfali, *"L'U d'O avait entrepris des démarches en 1987 : Désignation en vertu de la Loi 8,"Le Droit*, December 8, 2011.

mandated to propose an action plan to the University of Ottawa Senate, recommended that the institution consider, once again, designation under the *French Language Services Act*, and thus advised the University to seek independent legal advice on the matter.[24] Although it remains a bilingual institution, the debate about the designation of the University of Ottawa rages on to this day.[25] In the meantime, *Collège Boréal* was granted French-language designation status in 2008, and the *Collège de Hearst*[26] recently announced that it was seeking French-language designated status. And more recently, Laurentian University in Sudbury, *La Cité collégiale* and the University of Ottawa have also expressed interest in pursuing designation.

This preoccupation with the fate of French-language postsecondary education options is a testament to the vigour and perseverance of these regions to ensure that the Franco-Ontarian culture and community can continue to thrive. As it keeps the issue on the agenda and in the hearts and minds of the community, it is no coincidence that Northern and Eastern regions of Ontario enjoy the greatest number of bilingual and French-language postsecondary institutions, with two French-language colleges and seven universities.[27]

But Francophones in Central-Southwestern Ontario are no strangers to the French-language higher education debate. For instance, after years of unrelenting pressure on the government by groups such as the *Fédération de la jeunesse franco-ontarienne* (FESFO)[28] for French-language postsecondary institutions and programs in the region, and backed by a government study underlining Francophones' low participation rate in college-level education, the *Collège des Grands Lacs* opened its doors in 1995.[29] The *Collège*'s mission was

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[24] Task Force on Programs and Services in French, *French at the University of Ottawa, Volume I: Recommendations for the Development of Programs and Services in French, 2007-2012*, Ottawa, University of Ottawa, 2007.

[25] Professors in the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, "Trois études appuient la désignation de l'U d'O," *Le Droit*, December 8, 2011.

[26] The *Collège de Hearst* is commonly known as the *Université de Hearst*.

[27] The province's first French-language college, *La Cité collégiale*, is based in Ottawa, while the only postsecondary institution to have obtained French-language designation to date, *Collège Boréal* is centred in Sudbury. In addition to the University of Ottawa and its affiliate, Saint Paul University, the Northern and Eastern region of the province boasts the French-language Alfred College, the bilingual Dominican College, the bilingual Laurentian University and its affiliates, the bilingual University of Sudbury and the *Collège de Hearst*.

[28] Jean-François Sylvestre, "20 ans de vitalité Franco-Ontarienne – De la Loi sur les services en français à l'indépendance de TFO" *L'Express,* Week of November 14, 2006.

[29] Stacy Churchill, Normand Frenette and Saeed Quazi, *Éducation et besoins des Franco-Ontariens: le diagnostic d'un système d'éducation*, Toronto, Council on Franco-Ontarian Education, 1985. In 1980, the Council on Franco-Ontarian Education (CEFO) was tasked to advise the Ministers of Education and of Colleges and Universities concerning French-language education; it was replaced in 1993 by the Council for Franco-Ontarian Education and Training (CEFFO).

to encourage the blossoming cultural diversity of the Francophone communities that it served in the Central-Southwestern region of Ontario, to promote the French language, and to favour the economic development of Francophones.[30]

In 2002, the *Collège des Grands Lacs* was forced to close due to poor attendance. However, the *Collège*'s difficulties were to be expected, not only because of its severe lack of resources compared with the other two French-language colleges in the province, but also due to its unconventional operating model as a mostly 'virtual' college. Meanwhile, *La Cité collégiale* and *Collège Boréal* were conventional colleges with new buildings, including cafeterias, libraries, and laboratories, and other resources such as an amphitheatre. They also played a larger role in community-building and as a gathering-place for members of the Francophone community in their respective regions. In contrast, *Collège des Grands Lacs* was an unconventional college with no campus to speak of, but equipped to provide distance education throughout the region, including Toronto, Welland, Hamilton, Penetanguishene and Windsor.[31] Indeed, because there was no French-language college foothold in the Central-Southwestern region, *Collège des Grands Lacs* started off on an unequal footing compared with its counterparts:

"The three regions of Ontario were far from equal with respect to the diversity and quality of programs provided in French, or in both languages, a situation that still remains true for French-language colleges. Because human resources were scattered, they could not be used by new colleges, which also could not benefit from the same range of community services than before... [*Collège des Grands Lacs* also] had to deal with insufficient funding compared to the two other francophone colleges, as well as an assimilation rate in Central-Southwestern Ontario that was the highest in the province."[32]

After five years as an entirely virtual college, the college had to modify its mandate to offer conventional courses, with professors teaching students in classrooms. However, this was only to take place in Toronto, and the *Collège des Grands Lacs* was given little time or resources to make the changes.[33] The absence of adequate infrastructure and resources typically expected from a proper campus (libraries, cafeterias and other spaces in which

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[30] Anne Gilbert and Nicole Richer, *La transition vers nos établissements d'enseignement en Ontario français*, Council for Franco-Ontarian Education and Training, 1996. Available online: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/fre/document/reports/transit.html (page consulted in June 2012).

[31] Available online: http://council.london.ca/meetings/Archives/Agendas/Board%20Of%20Control%20Agendas/Board%20of%20Control%20Agendas%202005/2005-06-01%20Agenda/Item%2026.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Ibid.*

students and the community might gather), coupled with the decision by the administration to cut programs, meant the *Collège* was unable to attract Francophone students, particularly in light of the far greater services, resources, infrastructure and program offering by English-language colleges in the region.[34]

Despite its faults, the closure of the *Collège des Grands Lacs* was deeply felt by the Francophone community in Central-Southwestern Ontario that had long struggled, and continued to struggle, for French-language postsecondary options in the region. Thus, the closure of the *Collège* led to a renewed debate about the need for French-language postsecondary options in the region. This included court challenges and pressure from the community by grassroots citizen groups such as *Notre Collège,* dedicated to "...the re-establishment of a French-language community college run entirely by and for Francophones of Central-Southwestern Ontario."[35] *More* of this kind of dynamic French-language higher education debate, and all of its ensuing outcomes, is needed in the Central-Southwest region of Ontario.[36]

2.2 PROFILE OF CENTRAL-SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

Francophones in Central-Southwestern Ontario represent approximately one third of Francophones in Ontario. The central region includes Welland, Hamilton, Mississauga, Oshawa, the Greater Toronto Area and Penetanguishene and has a Francophone population of 167,235. Although Francophones only account for 2% of the total population in Central Ontario, this region is home to 28.7% of the province's Francophone population, with close to a third of this number living in the City of Toronto.[37] **One important note to add: The Francophone population in this region is growing.**

Central Region

Source: Office of Francophone Affairs, 2006. http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/franco-map.html

The Southwest region includes Windsor, Sarnia, London and Lakeshore, and has a Francophone

[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] Available online: http://www.ontario.ca/en/communities/francophones/profile/ONT05_024276.html **(page consulted in June 2012).**

population of 34,395.[38] While Francophones account for only 2.3% of the total population in Southwestern Ontario, this region is home to 5.9% of the province's Francophone population.

The Central-Southwestern region is a diversified economic hub, with thriving knowledge-based and service-based industries and one of the most important financial districts in the country. This region also encapsulates a vibrant cultural centre, with 2.2 million of the estimated 2.7 million Ontarians who identify themselves as a visible minority, living in the Greater Toronto Area.[39] This diversity is reflected in the region's Francophone community; for instance, almost one out of three Francophones in Toronto self-identifies as a member of a visible minority.[40] The Central-Southwestern region also includes a total of eight French-language designated areas under the *French Language Services Act*.

2.2.1 French-language postsecondary options

There is a lack of French-language postsecondary institutions and programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario. Only five of the 21 postsecondary institutions in the region offer some French-language programs.

These comprise two English-language universities with French-language faculties or campuses, one bilingual university, and two French-language colleges of applied arts and technology:

1. *Glendon College.* Established in 1959, Glendon College is the bilingual liberal arts campus of York University, an English-language institution located in Toronto. Glendon College is largely known for its undergraduate programs, although it also offers a limited number of graduate programs.

2. *Centre de recherche en éducation Franco-ontarienne (CRÉFO).* Formally an academic unit of the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), the CRÉFO came into its own in 1977. The Centre provides French-language graduate programs that focus on education and the study of Franco-Ontarian pedagogical matters. It offers both in-class and distance learning options.

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[38] *Ibid.*
[39] Tina Chui, Kelly Tran and Hélène Maheux, *Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census*, Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2008.
[40] *Supra* note 34.

3. University of Ottawa. Established in 1848, the University of Ottawa is located in Ottawa. In 1974, the University adopted the *Regulation on Bilingualism*, which stipulates, notably, that "the bilingual character of the University will be shown by the bilingualism of its programmes, its central administration, its general services, the internal administration of its faculties and schools, its teaching staff, its support staff and its student population." [41]

Southwestern Region

Source: Office of Francophone Affairs, 2006. http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/franco-map.html

4. *Collège Boréal.* Although its main campus is located in Sudbury, *Collège Boréal* opened a satellite campus in Toronto in 2002. The Toronto campus offers nearly 20 college and apprenticeship programs uniquely in French. The college also offers some programs in London, Hamilton and Windsor.[42]

5. *La Cité collégiale.* Its main campus is located in Ottawa. In 2011, *La Cité collégiale* opened a public relations program on the campus of Glendon College. *La Cité collégiale* offers other part-time programs.[43].

The brevity of this list illustrates the nature of the problem: **Central-Southwestern Ontario faces an alarming shortage of French-language colleges and universities, and this situation is highly inequitable.**

This deficit has been confirmed by an analysis of access rates conducted in 2008 by the Ministry. Access rates account for availability of programs by measuring the proportion of programs offered in English that are also offered in French.[44] Based on this calculation, Table 1 shows that even though Eastern Ontario enjoys the highest level of French-language postsecondary access compared with other regions, it remains severely underserviced, with an access rate of 36% at the undergraduate level and 39% for colleges.

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[41] For more information: http://web5.uottawa.ca/admingov/bilingualism.html (page consulted in June 2012).
[42] For more information: http://www.collegeboreal.ca/documents/annuaire_2012-2013%28lowres%29.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).
[43] For more information: http://www.lacitec.on.ca/campus.htm;jsessionid=75F5C4ACC5DD5EC181FE1C340129D47D#Icc Toronto (page consulted in June 2012).
[44] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5, p. 59.

Table 1: Access to French-language college and university programs by region

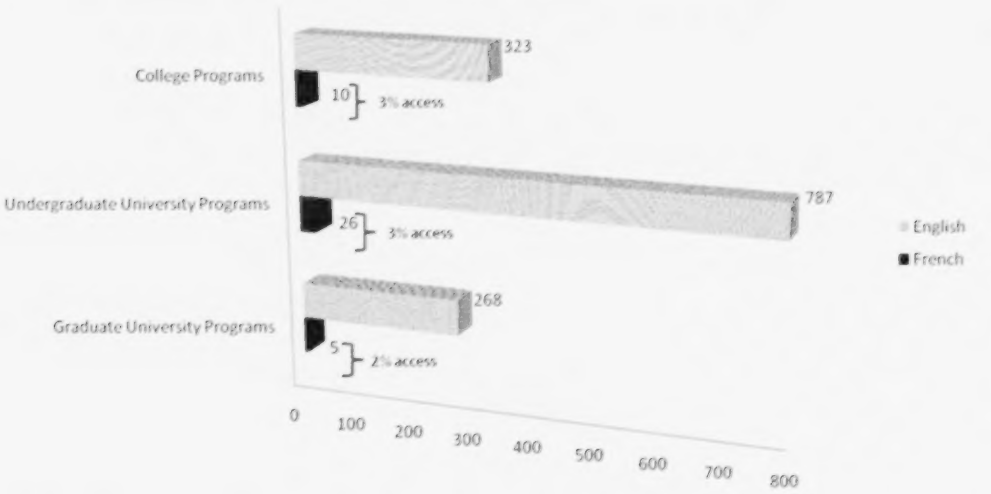
French-Language University Programs			
	Bachelor's	**Master's**	**Doctoral**
East	36%	61%	61%
North	33%	25%	14%
Centre-Southwest	3%	2%	1%

French-Language College Programs		
	College	**Apprenticeship**
East	39%	41%
North	30%	30%
Centre-Southwest	3%	3%

Source: French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, p. 10, 2008-2009.

Thus, there is considerably less access to French-language and bilingual postsecondary options across the province. This situation obviously does not put Francophones on an equal footing with the majority. Table 1 clearly indicates that the Central-Southwestern region is by far the worst off. Indeed, in comparison with available English-language postsecondary instruction and training, **Francophones in the region have only 3% access rate to French-language undergraduate and college programs**. This is also illustrated in Figure 1, which shows that there were only 10 French-language college programs in the region in 2008-2009, compared with 323 English-language programs. Similarly, for the same period there were 26 undergraduate French-language programs available compared to 397 in English. There is even less opportunity for Francophones to pursue French-language university master's and doctoral programs in the region, with a feeble 2% access rate. Examining access rates also reveals key differences within the region, including the fact that all French-language postsecondary programs are located in the Centre. In other words, there is a serious gap with regard to access to French-language college and bilingual university programs in the Southwest region, although the University of Ottawa offers a Bachelor of Education in an alternative mode at Glendon and in Windsor.

Figure 1: Postsecondary programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario by language with access rates for Francophones (2008)

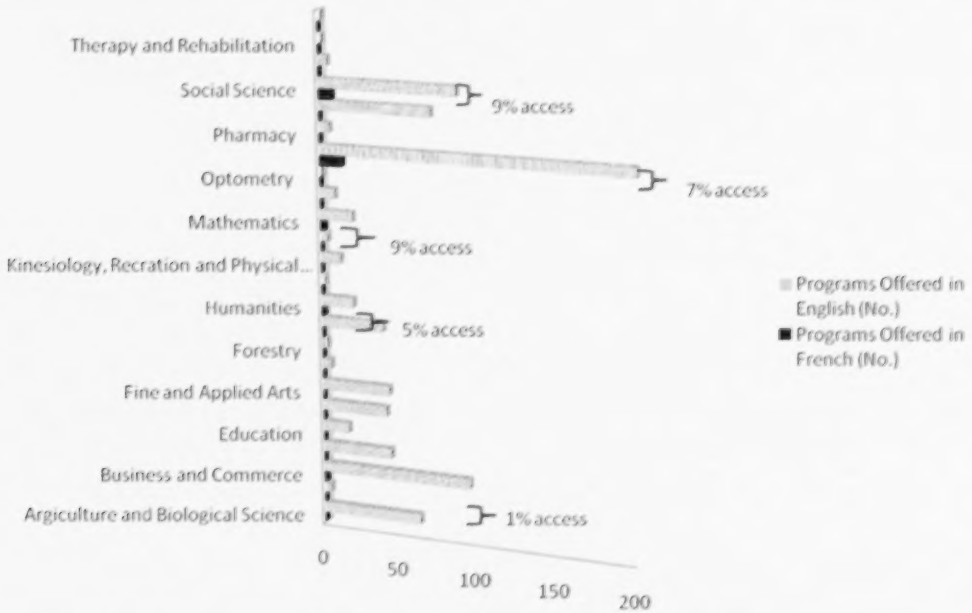


Source: French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Appendix, pp. 149 and 161.

A shortage of French-language postsecondary *institutions* necessarily entails a shortage of French-language *programs*. Thus, in addition to a deficit in overall access to university and college education in French, there is also a shortfall of programs in specific areas. The Ministry calculated the access rate for French- and English-language undergraduate university programs in 24 different categories in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

As Figure 2 shows, the Ministry's findings show that, in 2008, Francophones in the region had access to only 5 out of the 24 university undergraduate level program categories, with no access to the other 19 program categories, which include pharmacy-related studies, therapy and rehabilitation, optometry, medicine, health and other related programs. There was also no access to any French-language law, journalism, engineering, architecture or computer science programs. Moreover, among specific program categories that were available in French, the access rate was far from being equivalent to the English rate, ranging from just 1% for business and commerce to 9% for the social sciences (encompassing academic fields such as economics, criminology, psychology and political science) and for studies in mathematics.

Figure 2: Undergraduate programs offered in French and English in Central-Southwestern Ontario, 2008, with access rates for Francophones



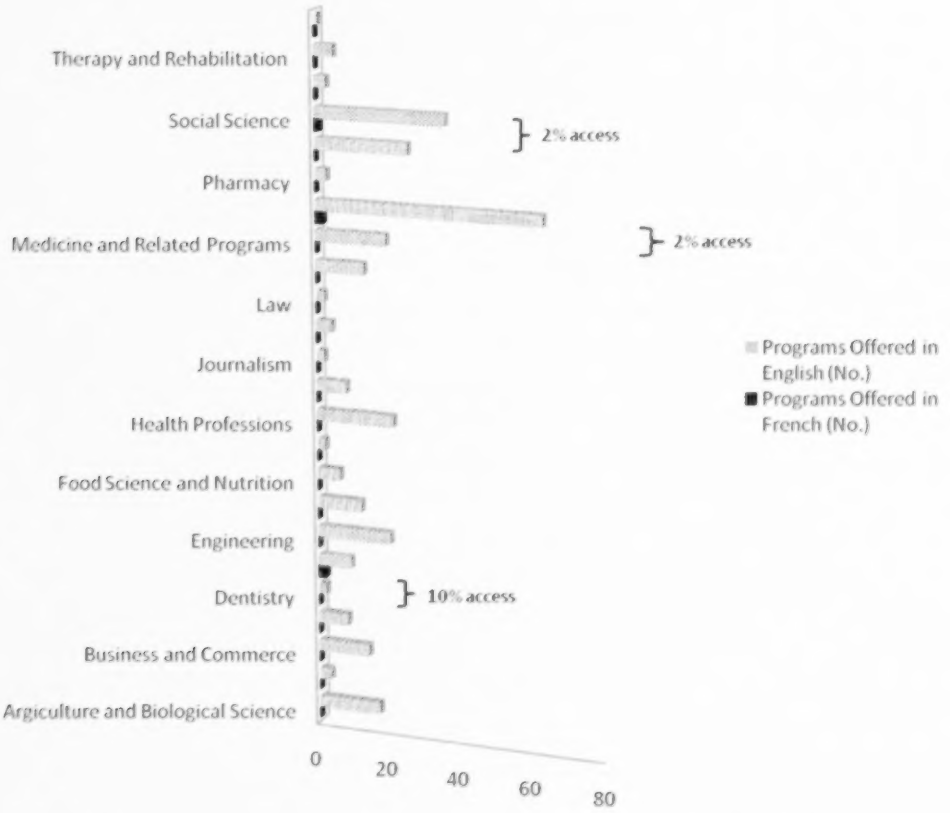
Source: French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, p. 140.

And further up the academic ladder, the situation only worsens for students hoping to continue their postsecondary studies in French. Indeed, according to the Ministry's calculations, as illustrated in Figure 3, those looking to pursue a master's or doctorate in French in Central-Southwestern Ontario in 2008 only had access to three program categories, including social sciences and education. In light of this, the Ministry concluded:

"We find that the further one decides to continue one's education at the graduate and postgraduate levels and do research in French, the more limited one is with regard to the number of program categories to which one has access."[45]

[45] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

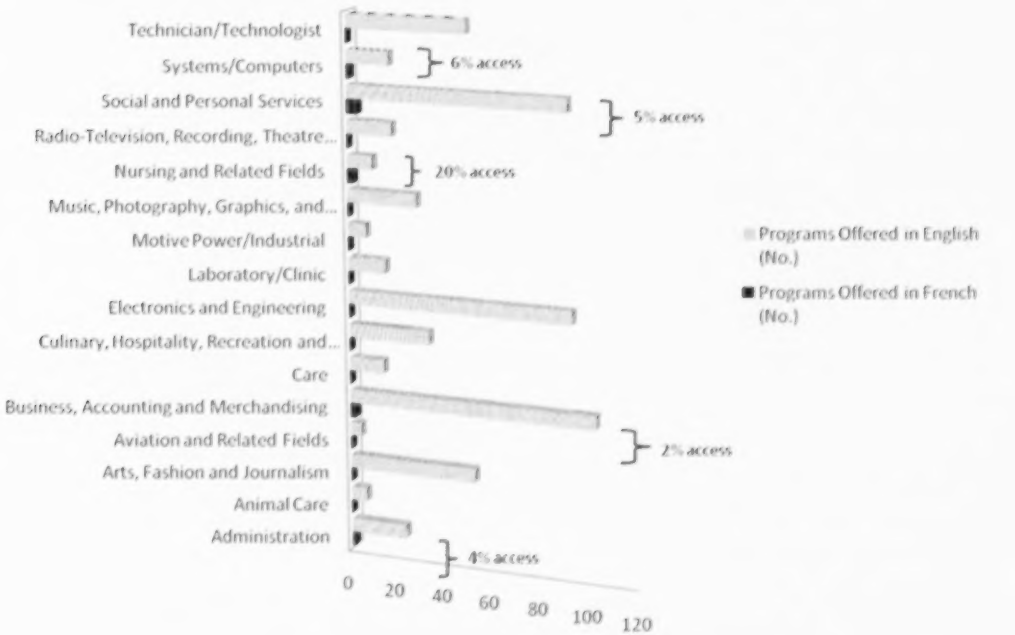
Figure 3: Graduate programs offered in French and English in Central-Southwestern Ontario with access rates for Francophones (2008)



Source: French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, pp. 143 and 146.

In addition to the short supply of specific French-language university programs, there is also a serious lack of certain French-language college programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario. The Ministry based its 2008 analysis of the Francophone access rate on 16 different college program categories, as illustrated in Figure 4. Based on this study, those wishing to pursue French-language college programs in the region could choose from only 5 out of 16 program categories. Indeed, students had very limited access to systems and computer-based programs, social and personal services programs, business and accounting instruction, administration, and nursing, which had the highest score with only a 20% access rate for Francophones. In other words, students were deprived of the opportunity to pursue 11 other types of college programs, ranging from technician or technologist to motive power, laboratory or clinic-based programs, electronics and engineering.

Figure 4: College programs offered in French and English in Central-Southwestern Ontario with access rates for Francophones (2008)



Source: French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, p. 158.

In light of the preceding analysis, one thing is clear: there is a demonstrated lack of access to bilingual and French-language postsecondary institutions and to a range and diversity of programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

Since the Ministry's study in 2008, there have been some improvements in areas such as the Allied Health sector, in which a number of programs are provided by both *La Cité collégiale* and *Collège Boréal*. These include Personal Support Worker Ontario College Certificate programs, Dental Assisting Levels I and II Ontario College Certificate programs, Dental Hygiene Ontario College Diploma programs, Paramedic Ontario College Diploma programs, and Occupational Therapist Assistant/Physiotherapist Assistant (OTA/PTA) Ontario College Diploma programs. Both colleges offer Practical Nursing Ontario College Diplomas, as well as Collaborative Nursing programs. They also offer various medical technician programs, such as Medical Radiation Technology and Massage Therapy. Furthermore, both colleges have a number of technician, technologist and technology programs, ranging from Pre-technology Ontario

College Certificate programs, to Mechanical and Chemical programs at various credential levels.

Indeed, investments have been made throughout Ontario in French-language postsecondary education recently. For example, in 2010-2011, the Ministry invested $84.8 million in French-language postsecondary education.

2.2.2 Divergent needs

While there is a "Francophone community," it is important to remember that it is not a monolithic group. In the case of Central-Southwestern Ontario, that diverse population comes with a diversity of needs. Indeed, the government has recognized the diversity of the community by adopting the Inclusive Definition of Francophone (IDF) as a means of accounting for these differences.[46]

In the area of French-language higher education, different individuals and groups, such as those graduating from high school, but also adults and newcomers, are drawn to postsecondary programs and institutions for different reasons and consequently have different expectations.

Despite the lack of French-language postsecondary options in Central-Southwestern Ontario, the region's Francophone community has the highest levels of postsecondary attainment. For instance, "almost a third of Francophones in Central Ontario have a university degree, compared to one in ten in Northeastern Ontario. In fact, proportionately more Francophones in Central Ontario have at least a bachelor's degree than Ontarians overall (32.2% compared to 28.1%)."[47] However, in view of the severe lack of French-language postsecondary options, it is likely that these students receive degrees from English-language universities.

For instance, according to the Ministry, in 2003-2004, there were 1,627 Francophone students graduating from secondary school. From this group, a feeble 1% enrolled in a French-language college, while only 5% enrolled in a

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[46] In 2009, the Government of Ontario introduced the Inclusive Definition of Francophone (IDF) to better reflect the changing face and diversity of the province's Francophone community. The IDF includes in addition to people whose mother tongue is French, exogamous families, and individuals whose mother tongue is neither English nor French (allophones) but who have a particular knowledge of French as an official language and use it at home. Consequently, it is important to note that the data for 1991 to 2001 differ from the 2006 data because the former are based on the more restrictive approach while latter are based on the IDF.

[47] For more information: http://www.ontario.ca/en/communities/francophones/profile/ONT05_024281.html (page consulted in June 2012).

bilingual university and 36% enrolled in English-language postsecondary institutions.[48] The Ministry also reports that students in the region — Francophone and Anglophone alike — seem to flock to university campuses and are more reluctant to enrol in college. Thus, while approximately 14% of Francophone high school graduates enrolled in college in 2003, twice as many, or 28%, enrolled in university.[49]

These data do not provide any insight into the needs of specific subsets of the Francophone community, such as newcomers or adults, who may also be pursuing studies in college or university. Although according to Colleges Ontario 40% of students are under the age of 21 and 37% are between 21 and 25 years old,[50] Francophones students who live in Central-Southwestern Ontario tend to be older than other students. There are a number of reasons for this: some adults turn to college for career development; others do so to supplement their existing degrees or diplomas with a college diploma or professional certificate; and yet other adults choose to enrol in a college program that could lead to a rapid and focused transition into the labour market.

Since 57% of immigrants coming to Ontario are aged 30 to 64, it is possible that a sizable number of Francophone newcomers seeking a French-language postsecondary education favour college over university. Indeed, adult newcomers who are allophones but have a knowledge of French may seek out French college programs in order to gain skills and experience that will enable them enter the labour market as soon as possible. And they may find that a college program offers a more efficient transition into the labour market than a university degree.

This seems to be the case at *Collège Boréal*'s Toronto campus: in 2002, just 35% of its students were Canadian citizens; 65% were newcomers (including immigrants and visa students).[51] Moreover, 60% of those enrolled were aged 30 or older, and 85% of them applied as adults (as opposed to being high school graduate applicants).[52]

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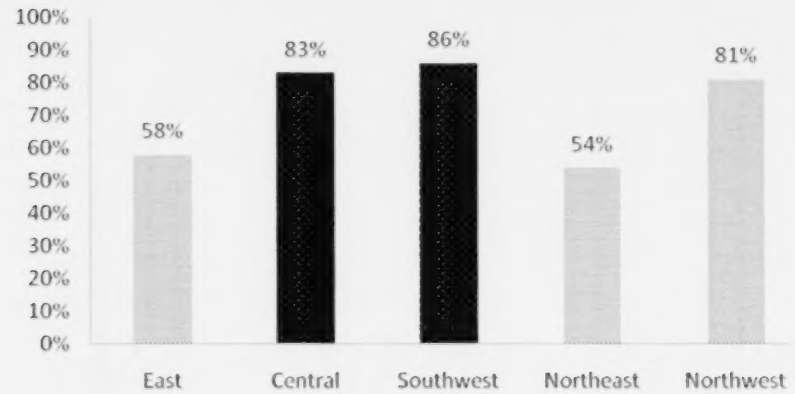
[48] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5, p. 166.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] The age range included here is from 25 to 54 and up. For more information: http://www.collegesontario.org/research/2011_environmental_scan/2011_scan_students.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).
[51] Collège Boréal, *10 years of success; Using an Innovative Model for Postsecondary Education in Central-Southwestern Ontario*, 2012, pp. 19-20.
[52] *Ibid*, pp. 5-7.

Moreover, in his study "Two languages, a World of Opportunities: Second-language learning in Canada's universities",[53] Official Languages Commissioner Graham Fraser shows that more and more students wish to pursue postsecondary studies in the other official language, not just because it makes sense to acquire a competitive edge in today's economic reality, but also for very personal reasons:

"Strikingly, many student participants emphasized personal development and enrichment as their motivation for wanting to learn a second language. They see the need for knowledge of other languages as a given in the modern, increasingly global context—and therefore as an integral part of postsecondary education in today's world."

Finally, as Figure 5 indicates, the Central and Southwest regions also have one of the highest levels of exogamous Francophone families with children, or families with one parent who is Francophone and the other who is not. This factor may have an important bearing on participation rates in French-language colleges and universities and should thus be taken into account in postsecondary policy planning. For instance, studies suggest that within the context of the Franco-Ontarian linguistic minority, the steady rise in levels of exogamous households leaves the Francophone population vulnerable to assimilation.[54]

Figure 5: Exogamous households in Ontario by region, 2006 (%)



Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of population*, 2006.

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[53] Available online: http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/html/stu_etu_102009_p6_e.php (page consulted in June 2012).

[54] Rodrigue Landry, Réal Allard and Kenneth Deveau, *Profil sociolangagier des élèves de 11e année des écoles de langue française de l'Ontario : Outil de réflexion sur les défis de l'aménagement linguistique en éducation*, Moncton, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, 2007, p. 16.

2.2.3 Population size and growth

The shortage of French-language postsecondary options is particularly worrisome in view of the sizable number of Francophones who live in Central-Southwestern Ontario. According to the 2006 Census, **there are 201,630 Francophones in the region**.[55]

Furthermore, compared with other communities in the province, **the Central-Southwestern Francophone community is growing**. Indeed, while the number of Francophones in other regions is either declining or growing at a slower pace, the Central-Southwestern region as a whole is in full bloom. This is reflected in Figure 6, which reports differences in population growth over a 15-year period (between 1991 and 2006) by region in Ontario. Negative values denote a decline in population, while positive values indicate population growth.

Figure 6: Difference in Francophone population growth in Ontario by region, 1991-2006 [56]

Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of population*, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006.

Thus, compared with the East, Northeast and Northwest regions of the province, Central-Southwestern Ontario experienced the greatest population growth. **This steady increase over time is largely explained by the fact that a significant**

[55] For more information: http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/franco-06map-stat.html (page consulted in June 2012).
[56] *Supra* note 5.

number of newcomers to Canada choose to settle in the region, with more than one in four (27.4%) Francophones in the Central-Southwestern region born outside of Canada.[57]

Clearly, Central-Southwestern Ontario is where an important part of the future is for the Franco-Ontarian community. It is also home to a large number of Francophone newcomers to the country with a clear need for French-language services. Indeed, these new immigrants wish to build a better future for themselves and for their children. But questions remain as to how they will do this. Will they join the Franco-Ontarian community and retain their French-language skills along with their willingness to participate in building this community's institutions? And are they given the opportunity to do so in Central-Southwestern Ontario, where, compared with the northern and eastern part of the province, there is a very evident lack of Francophone institutions?

Some of the answers to these questions are found in the next chapters of this report, which explore certain key issues related to the shortage of French-language postsecondary programs and institutions in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

[57] For more information: http://www.ontario.ca/en/communities/francophones/profile/ONT05_024278.html (page consulted in June 2012).

CHAPTER 3 – SUPPLY AND DEMAND ISSUES

While the conventional approach to supply and demand, in which demand is stimulated by supply, may work in the context of a linguistic majority, this is certainly not the case for a linguistic minority. Indeed, a linguistic minority often finds its voice silenced or muffled by the much louder voice of the majority. This is true for Francophones in Ontario. And this is also why linguistic minority rights exist in the first place: they represent an acknowledgement that the special status of linguistic minorities deserves additional protection to allow their voice to be heard.

Assessing and meeting the needs of Franco-Ontarians poses particular challenges to policy-makers who must develop ways to identify these special needs. This chapter explores the enduring challenges of supply and demand as it relates to French-language postsecondary education in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

3.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVE OFFER

As stated previously, the importance of actively offering services in French to Franco-Ontarians is clearly illustrated by the sizable number of Francophones graduating from secondary school who opt for English-language postsecondary institutions and programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario. According to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, this is a direct result of the lack of French-language postsecondary options in the region:

"[...] the fact that more than twice as many graduates transferred from one system [French-language] to the other [English-language] indicates the need for a concerted strategy to combat the exodus of young Francophones from the Central and Western regions. [...] The alternative [for Francophone high school graduates] is to study in one of the 15 English-language colleges or one of the 11 English-language universities serving the two regions [...]."[58]

Applying the conventional logic of supply and demand to this situation, however, would fail to capture important nuances that exist in the context of a linguistic minority. As the Ministry's findings suggests, low enrolment rates in French-language postsecondary institutions in Central-Southwestern Ontario should *not* be interpreted as a simple lack of demand, as one might be tempted to do within

[58] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5, p. 92.

the level playing field of the Anglophone linguistic majority, but rather as the necessary outcome of a *lack of supply* in the form of French-language postsecondary options.

Thus, while it is commonly held that *supply* is triggered by *demand*, studies reveal that this relationship is reversed in the unique context of linguistic minorities, as reported in a study by Frenette and Quazi:

"[T]he institutional logic of postsecondary institutions requires that minority students demonstrate a demand for French-medium programs before the supply of the same be provided, but the logic of the minority student is quite the opposite, that is, the demand for French-medium programs...is shown to be a response to the supply of the same. It would appear then that in a minority context, it is the supply of educational services which creates the demand rather than the contrary."[59]

Other Canadian jurisdictions have also concluded that the special context of the Francophone linguistic minority calls for an alternative to the conventional wisdom regarding supply and demand. For instance, a Justice Canada environmental scan of the barriers to judicial and legal services for a Francophone minority population across 12 provinces and territories revealed that:

"[I]f demand is low, the supply of services in the minority language is also low [...] there is a tendency to say that the low number of requests for judicial and legal services in the minority language justifies a somewhat limited supply of services. This position resembles what we might call the logic of the marketplace, in that it involves basing supply on demand. It seems to us, however, that from the standpoint of the Department of Justice of Canada it is coming at the question the wrong way to consider it from a strictly market-oriented angle, as if access to judicial and legal services in the language of the official language minority ought to follow the economic law of supply and demand."[60]

In light of the reversed relationship between supply and demand in the case of a linguistic minority, it is important for postsecondary institutions and programs to be *actively offered* in French. The French Language Services Commissioner has repeatedly stressed that effective planning for and delivery of French-language services requires active offer. This view is also supported by the Justice Canada

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[59] Normand Frenette and Saeed Quazi, "Some Long Term Lessons From Minority Language Education in Ontario," in *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 1999.
[60] PGF/GTA Consultants, *Environmental Scan: Access to Justice in Both Official Languages*, Ottawa, Report submitted to the Department of Justice, 2002.

study, which concludes that rather than follow the conventional logic of supply based on demand, the linguistic minority context requires:

"Another perspective, the one adopted by the Supreme Court and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, which holds that this is, first, a matter of law. [...] That approach imposes obligations on the judicial system and the government to make services available in the minority official language. This justifies, for example, the idea of a genuine policy for active offer of judicial and legal services in the minority official language. From that standpoint, the supply of services in the minority official language must not be determined simply on the basis of demand."[61]

The importance of understanding the reversed relationship between supply and demand within the context of a linguistic minority cannot be overstated. As the next sections of this chapter will show, supply and demand issues helped to perpetuate the situation of French-language postsecondary education in Central-Southwestern Ontario. Indeed, current approaches have led to a somewhat vicious circle in which the absence of French-language postsecondary options—reflected in the staggering 3% access rate—is explained by a lack of demand, which in turn is explained by a lack of supply, which is then, yet again, explained by a lack of demand. And this becomes an endless loop that, in the end, does little to tackle the issue. The key to moving from a vicious circle to virtuous one is to gain a greater appreciation for the mechanics of supply and demand in the Francophone linguistic minority context, grounded in active offer.

3.2 PROXIMITY

One of the factors that contribute to the vicious circle of a lack of supply and demand for French-language postsecondary education is proximity to educational institutions. Indeed, studies show that the distance between a student's home and his or her college or university has a significant influence on postsecondary educational decisions.[62] For instance, two Statistics Canada studies found that, even after common factors affecting postsecondary participation, such as family income and parental education are controlled for, students were less likely to enrol in university or college if they resided "out-of-commuting distance."[63]

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[61] *Ibid.*

[62] Marc Frenette, *Access to College and University: Does Distance Matter?* Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2002. Marc Frenette, *Too Far to Go On? Distance to School and University Participation*, Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2002.

[63] According to scholars, between 0 and 40 or 50 km is roughly considered 'within commuting distance,' and anything above 70 or 80 km is considered 'beyond commuting distance'.

When faced with the choice of moving and incurring an additional financial burden to study at a French-language college or university, or staying debt-free and attending a local English-language school, students tend to choose the latter. In addition to the financial costs of having to live away from home, moving also carries with it emotional costs associated with leaving home and one's established social and family network.[64] And there are socio-economic implications to this as well, because low-income families disproportionately tend to live out-of-commuting distance from postsecondary institutions.

The correlation between postsecondary participation and distance to schools also has implications for the Franco-Ontarian linguistic minority in Central-Southwestern Ontario. Although a sizable Francophone population is located in Toronto, where French-language programs in the region are centred, other Francophones in the region must travel great distances if they want to have access to French-language postsecondary college or university programs. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 7, which shows that only one out of nine selected cities across Central-Southwestern Ontario is located within what scholars tend to consider 'commuting distance' (40-50 km): Mississauga. Meanwhile, Francophones in six other cities live well over 100 km from the nearest French-language programs offered in Toronto.[65] Thus, for students living with their parents in Sarnia or London, studying in English at the University of Western Ontario is cheaper than commuting several hours to attend class or living in Toronto to attend a French-language school. The same can be said for students living in Windsor or Lakeshore with respect to the University of Windsor, for students living in Hamilton, who are very close to McMaster University, as well as for those in Welland, who are close to Brock University.

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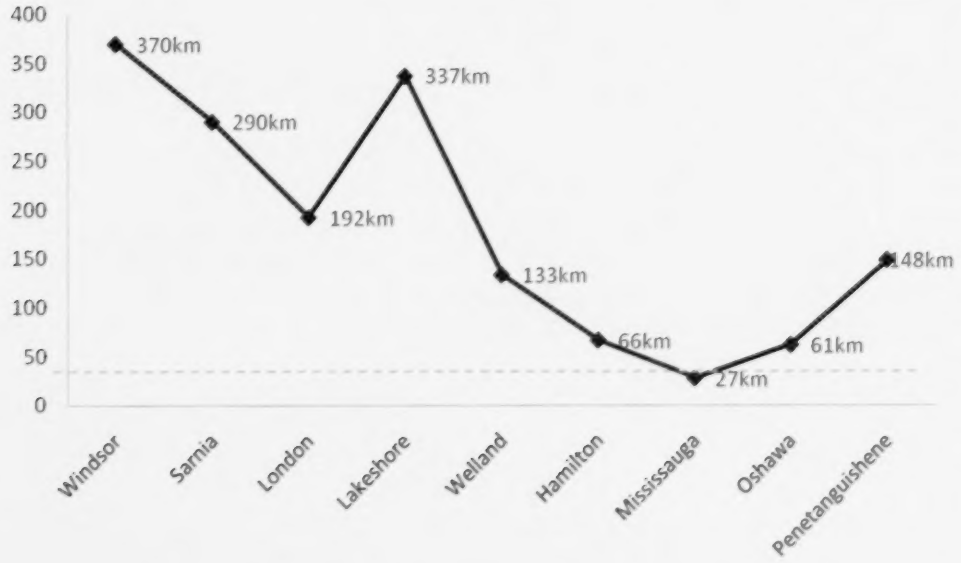
[64] Marc Frenette, *op. cit.*

[65] This distance is based on driving direction estimates calculated by www.MapQuest.ca.

Figure 7: Distance (km) to Toronto from selected cities in Central-Southwestern Ontario (based on a 40-50 km 'within-commuting distance' line)



Note: Distances are based on estimates for travel by car, as calculated by MapQuest.ca.

Also, while Francophone students living in Central-Southwestern Ontario may wish to pursue French-language postsecondary studies and may live within commuting distance of a college or university, chances are that those institutions do not offer French-language programs. In this sense, *language* adds another component to mere distance, pushing students towards one of the many fine English-language postsecondary institutions in the region. By virtue of the lack of French-language postsecondary options in Central-Southwestern Ontario, the issue of proximity becomes intimately tied to one's language of education.

This is confirmed by several studies, which show that students' preference is to continue studying in French at the postsecondary level even within a minority setting, and to do so within close proximity to the parental home.[66] One study found that a significant 47% of students in Ontario ranked 'distance' as a major-to-moderate barrier to pursuing postsecondary education in French.[67] This

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[66] Normand Labrie, Sylvie Lamoureux and Denise Wilson, *L'accès des francophones aux études postsecondaires en Ontario : Le choix des jeunes. Rapport Final*, Toronto, Centre de recherches en éducation franco-ontarienne, 2009, p. 34.

[67] Réal Allard, Rodrigue Landry and Kenneth Deveau, *And After High School? A Pan-Canadian Study of Grade 12 Students in French-Language Schools in Minority Settings, Educational*

finding takes on even greater significance when one considers that this result does not even account for regional differences across Ontario. And in fact, the 'effect' of the especially low access rate in Central-Southwestern Ontario is diluted by the responses from other Ontarian regions.

Thus, "the will to pursue French-language studies is mitigated by the availability of programs close to home. [...] in most linguistic minority settings, young people are conditioned by program availability. If programs are not available in French, young [Francophone] people tend to enrol in English [schools], which represents a significant proportion of the 25% of respondents [from our study] that chose to enrol in an Anglophone institution."[68]

In the case of French-language higher education in Central-Southwestern Ontario, the lack of access in terms of the diversity of programs and institutions is therefore compounded by the lack of access in terms of distance from actual French-language colleges and universities.

3.3 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Another example of the effect that French-language postsecondary supply has on demand in the context of the Francophone linguistic minority is reflected in the issue of retention and recruitment at the elementary and secondary education levels. Despite the constitutional right to linguistic minority education, and despite policies such as the *Politique d'aménagement linguistique*, the lack of French-language postsecondary programs and institutions has the effect of dissuading primary and secondary school students from entering and remaining in French-language education in Central-Southwestern Ontario. The shortfall in French-language programs and institutions in the region appears to be seen as limiting a student's career and marketability.

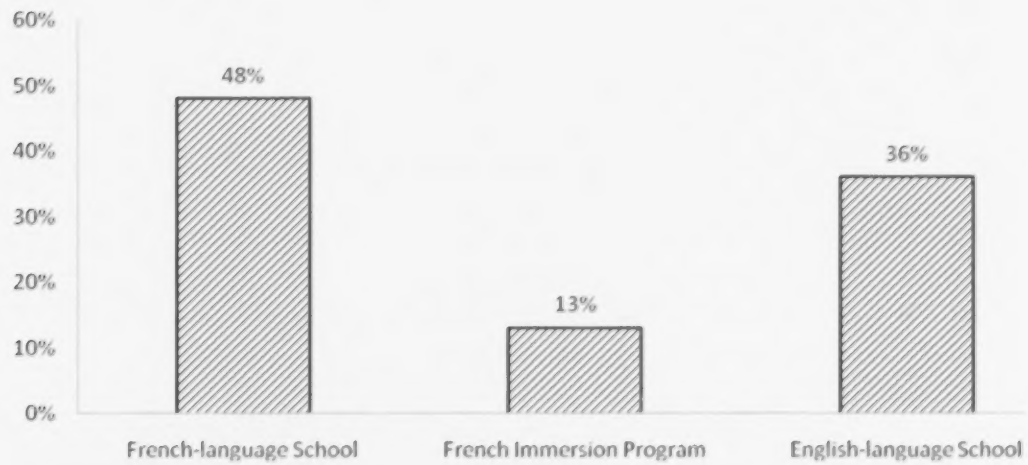
Aspirations and Plans to Pursue a Career in Their Home Region, Moncton, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, 2009, pp. 10-11.

[68] Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada, *Poursuite des études postsecondaires en milieu minoritaire francophone : intentions des diplômés du secondaire en 2003*, Ottawa, Canadian Heritage, 2003, p. 51.

3.3.1 Recruitment

In its responses to the Commissioner's preliminary questions of September 22, 2011, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities provided Ministry of Education data regarding the recruitment of children of French-language rights holders and newcomers with a knowledge of French at the primary and secondary school level as a key challenge. For instance, as shown in Figure 8, although 48% of rights-holding Francophones attend French-language high school in the region, a majority (52%) do not, though there is a steady increase in the number of students who attend French-language schools. Findings also show that 13% of rights-holding Francophones enrol in immersion programs, rather than French-language schools, in the region.

Figure 8: High school participation by language program in Central-Southwestern Ontario (2006)



Source: Data from the Survey of the Vitality of Official-Language Minorities. Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Response to the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner, Formal Investigation Document, December 2011, p. 8.

Furthermore, although there were over 3,000 school-age newcomers with a knowledge of French in the region in 2008, just 2,000 enrolled in French-language schools. Accordingly, approximately 1,000 newcomer children are enrolled in schools other than French-language schools. Ultimately, since only 28,300 students attended French-language schools out of the 54,200 school-age Francophone children in the Central-Southwestern region in 2006, the Ministry has identified a potential 25,900 additional French-speaking students that *could* attend French-language schools in the region, but do not.

3.3.2 Retention

In addition to the difficulties involved in recruiting students to French-language primary and secondary schools, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has also stated that retaining students already enrolled in such schools also poses a challenge.[69]

According to the Ministry, while students in French-language schools transfer to English-language schools at every grade level, the erosion of the French-language education system is especially pronounced during transition years, such as between grades 6 and 7, and between grades 8 and 9. For instance, while 22,063 students were enrolled in French-language elementary schools in the region between 2007 and 2008, only 5,523 were enrolled in French-language high schools—a difference of 16,540 students.[70] **This discrepancy signals an alarming trend of students transferring from French-language education that becomes even more evident when the numbers of students in grade 6 and grade 9 are compared.** This is particularly pronounced in the Southern region, where the drop in the number of students pursuing their studies in French from elementary to secondary has resulted in a -26% gap.[71]

Despite the recruitment and retention issues that primary and secondary schools in Central-Southwestern Ontario may face, a recent report by the French Language Services Commissioner indicates that facilities in the Greater Toronto Area themselves are operating at a capacity that is either at the same level as or above the average utilization rate for publicly funded schools in the province because more and more students would like to attend French-language schools.[72]

3.3.3 Postsecondary implications

The inability to recruit and retain students in the French-language system before they graduate from high school has a possible impact on French-language postsecondary recruitment. This can be seen in Figure 9, which shows that in

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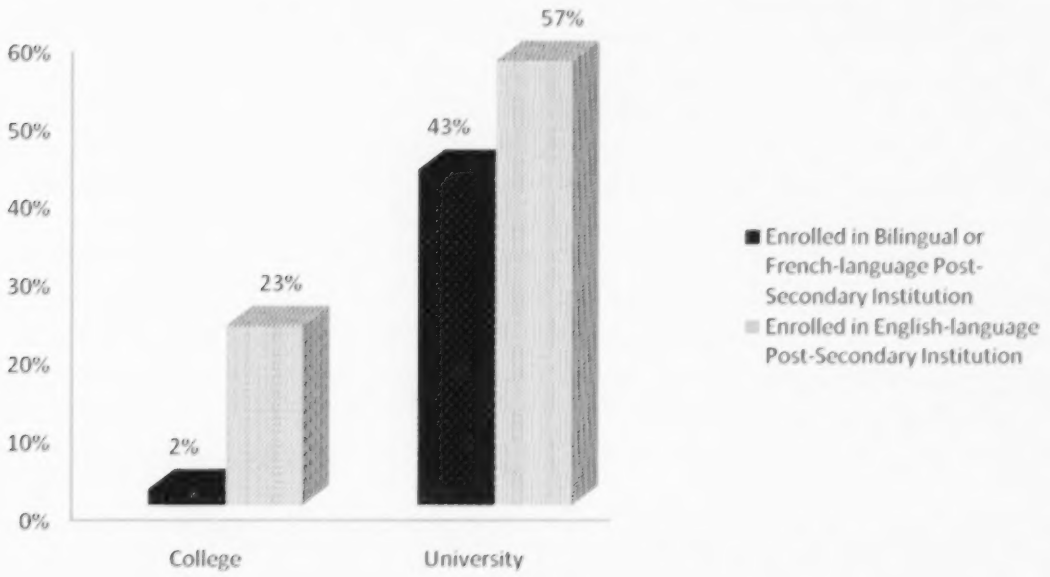
[69] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5, p. 133.
[70] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch,*Document d'orientation de l'éducation en langue française*, Ottawa, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2009, p. 70..
[71] *Ibid*, p. 71.
[72] Office of the French Language Services Commissioner, *French-language Schools in the Greater Toronto Area: When the Most Elementary Becomes Secondary*, Investigation Report, Toronto, 2011.

2009, the majority of students graduating from French-language high schools in Central-Southwestern Ontario chose to pursue English-language postsecondary studies, with 23% opting for an English-language college, and 57% opting for an English-language university.[73]

Figure 9: Enrolment of French-language high school graduates in colleges or universities in Central-Southwestern Ontario, by language of institution (2009)



Source: Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, Response to the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner, Formal Investigation Document, December 2011.

The emphasis is on Francophones students who actually graduated from French-language high schools. Figure 9 does not capture all the Francophone students who left the French education sector in droves, mostly at the Grade 8 level. The Commissioner addressed this situation in his 2011 Investigation Report *French-language schools in the Greater Toronto Area: When the most elementary becomes secondary*:

"Parents and their children in this particular area, face difficult choices after Grade 8 — the word "choices" being used very loosely here —, as an inadequate offering of French-language schools is more akin to a constructive rejection of

[73] In 2008-2009, the Ministry transition data demonstrates that the postsecondary education transition rates for students in French-language secondary schools are greater than the transition rates for students in English-language secondary schools.

one's constitutional right and the condoning of assimilation. Access to the secondary level is of particular interest to the Commissioner's Office, as statistics show a very large migration of students — close to 20% — from the French-language system to the English-language systems between Grade 8 and Grade 9 in the Southern region of Ontario. There can be little doubt that this situation is directly related to the inaccessibility of French-language schools since data demonstrates that retention rates decline as distance and inaccessibility of schools increase."[74]

It is important to note that students' desertion of the French-language education system at the postsecondary level cannot be easily explained by a simple matter of preference for English-language education. **Indeed, when asked about their language preference at the postsecondary level, a majority of French-language high school students said they would prefer to pursue French-language college or university programs.**[75]

Ultimately, the issue of recruitment and retention leads right back to the vicious circle of supply and demand in a linguistic minority setting. The staggering lack of supply of French-language postsecondary options in Central-Southwestern Ontario may very well reduce current and future demand for French-language postsecondary education, as suggested in recruitment challenges and cumulative attrition rates at the primary and secondary level. This results in a drop in the number of students positioning themselves to pursue French-language college or university studies in the region, despite their actual preference for French-language instruction.

3.4 PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

Another important factor that one needs to consider seriously is the fact that in Central-Southwestern Ontario, there are already a vast number of highly reputable English-language postsecondary institutions. Indeed, this is an important consideration for Francophone students in the region, who understandably want the best education possible for themselves, even at the risk of losing their French-language skills.[76]

Moreover, when a Francophone student chooses to ignore the proximity barrier by pursuing postsecondary education in French, it does not matter that much if

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[74] Office of the French Language Services Commissioner, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[75] Réseau des cégeps et collèges francophones du Canada, *op. cit.*, p.27.
[76] *Supra* note 66.

the program is offered in Sudbury or Ottawa, as long as the program in itself is excellent.

The question then remains, Is there a niche for postsecondary education in French within the region? Absolutely! Though not referring specifically to French-language programs in the Central-Southwestern region, the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario[77] has already indicated that one of the keys to providing programs and services is differentiation. This topic will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 6.

3.5 LACK OF DATA

Identifying Francophones is a necessary first step to recording their needs or 'demand.' This is especially true in the case of linguistic minorities since, as mentioned previously, their demand can easily be overshadowed by that of the majority. Yet the government currently has no effective way of tracking students who are pursuing or could pursue French-language postsecondary education, nor does it have a reliable means of distinguishing Francophone postsecondary students from their Anglophone counterparts. As such, there is a serious lack of data, and the data that does exist is inaccurate as it does not include all Francophones. The lack of data has a negative effect when it comes to estimating Francophone postsecondary enrolment and providing access based on this demand. As one study for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities states:

"In context of the linguistic *majority*, identifying students' language is not really significant. Given the linguistic reality of Francophones in Ontario, the existing procedure can potentially limit the number of Francophones identified, making the actions of the public decision-makers less effective."[78]

It is difficult to develop policies to address needs when demand has not been properly quantified. Thus, the lack of data poses a challenge to policy-makers who are tasked with identifying Francophone 'demand' and designing programs and initiatives to meet that community's needs.

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[77] For more information: http://heqco.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/DifferentiationENG.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).

[78] Linda Cardinal, François Charbonneau and Tina Desabrais, *Francophonie and Postsecondary Education in Ontario : Results of the Research on Data Management and the Implementation of Measures to Quantify French-Language Postsecondary Education in Ontario*, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2011, p. 8.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

In light of the fact that postsecondary education attracts a broad range of students, the Commissioner recommends that the government take the necessary steps to shift away from the current method of data collection based on an incomplete understanding of French-language education centred only on rights-holders, as it applies in the context of elementary and secondary schools, to include those who could potentially pursue French-language postsecondary studies in Ontario. This includes going beyond gathering data on French-language high school students, to include immersion students, those who belong to exogamous and allophone households, as well as Francophiles.

3.5.1 Identifying Francophones

The question of *who* is a Francophone may seem as straightforward as identifying those who speak French. However, it turns out that defining and measuring Francophones is much more complicated. Data on Francophones drawn from surveys in which language is determined on the basis of single-factor indicators (e.g., mother tongue, language of communication, language spoken at home) are generally too limiting. For instance, government data used to be based on a definition of Francophone based on one's mother tongue. However, such an approach excludes those belonging to exogamous Anglophone families and allophones who speak French — groups that represent a significant, and growing, proportion of the Francophone community in Central-Southwestern Ontario. Indeed, as shown in Figure 5 (Exogamous households, Chapter 2), more than 80% of Francophones in Central-Southwestern Ontario identify themselves as belonging to an exogamous household.

In light of this increasingly diverse profile of the Francophone community, the government announced in 2009 that it was adopting a new definition of Francophone: the Inclusive Definition of Francophone (IDF). And unlike the previous method of 'counting' Francophones, the IDF was not solely based on mother tongue, but also on language(s) spoken in the home, so as not to exclude allophones and those belonging to exogamous households.[79] Adopting the IDF to

[79] Available online: http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/news-090604.html (page consulted in June 2012).

measure Francophones is especially important in the area of postsecondary education.

Since the clientele of universities and colleges is not restricted to Charter rights holders, it is not inconceivable that French-language postsecondary education systems may attract other population groups. Thus, Francophone immigrants settling in Ontario can help to increase the number of people studying in French. Another emerging trend relates to the number of adult learners who are going back to school out of personal interest or to start a second career. Finally, Anglophone students in French Immersion and Extended French programs are another group that could be interested in postsecondary education in French.[80]

Glendon College is a prime example of an institution attracting students beyond rights-holders. Indeed, Glendon is a bilingual school in Central-Southwestern Ontario — a region with a high number of exogamous households — and it is well known that Glendon's student body consists of a sizable number of Francophiles.

Ultimately, in light of the diversity of needs for French-language postsecondary education in the region, it is crucial to gather and analyse reliable data on *all* Francophones.

3.5.2 The primary and secondary school level

As mentioned earlier in this report, there is a vicious circle of supply and demand which exists in Central-Southwestern Ontario: the lack of French-language postsecondary options contributes to cumulative attrition rates at the primary and secondary education levels, which in turn reduces the number of graduates choosing to pursue French-language postsecondary studies, which reinforces the lack of supply of French-language programs. Consequently, the fates of the primary and secondary education system and the postsecondary education system are inextricably linked — particularly in the context of a linguistic minority such as the Franco-Ontarian minority. In light of this, it is essential to determine who is currently a rights holder and can potentially pursue French-language postsecondary education, in order to get a sense of the true potential Francophone demand for French-language higher education.

However, over the course of this investigation, it became clear to the Commissioner that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training,

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[80] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5, p. 93.

Colleges and Universities do not have data on all potential French-language postsecondary students. For instance, while the Ministry of Education has complete data on students attending French-language schools — allowing it to track their academic pathway — this is not the case for students in French immersion programs or students who are either immigrants or newcomers to Ontario and have a knowledge of the French language that would allow them to pursue French-language postsecondary studies if given the opportunity.

Indeed, on the basis of the enrolment data it had collected, the Ministry knew that in the 2009-2010 school year, there were 3,957 students enrolled in French immersion at the elementary level, and students enrolled in high school French immersion programs, including 5,381 in grades 10, 11 and 12 in the region. However, the Ministry could not determine how many of those students graduated, how many of them went on to postsecondary studies, and how many chose to do so in French or English. The Ministry was also unable to provide data on the number of French-speaking immigrants in Central-Southwestern Ontario who were old enough to pursue postsecondary studies, the number who chose to pursue postsecondary studies, and whether they did so in French or in English. It would seem that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities are planning and developing policy based on a restrictive definition of who is considered Francophone.

3.5.3 The postsecondary level

The lack of data about Francophones at the primary and secondary education level also persists at the postsecondary level. Simply put, for the moment, the government has no way to accurately identify which students applying to colleges and universities are Francophone. This underscores the need for more data on Francophones, according to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities:

"[D]ata on the number of Francophone registrants in the English-language postsecondary system would enable us to get a more accurate picture of the impact of language transfer. In fact, registrants in English-language colleges were counted as Anglophones. Similarly, we do not know how many Anglophones enrol in French-language colleges. For the purposes of this study, we assumed that the percentages represented by these two groups were negligible and they were therefore not considered in the observations."[81]

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[81] *Ibid.*

One study has attributed this lack of complete and accurate data, at least in part, to poor language data management. For instance, the Ministry's reliance on information from online admissions systems, including the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) and the Ontario College Application Service, the University Statistical Enrolment Report (USER system), produces language data based on a student's mother tongue. However, this system is a self-reported variable. Therefore, it might not capture all the Francophone students since it does not adhere to Ontario's new Inclusive Definition of Francophone (IDF).[82]

Moreover, it is currently not possible for the Ministry to determine whether a student is enrolled in a French-language, bilingual or English-language program, or whether a Francophone or non-Francophone student enrolled in a French-language program obtains part or all of their education in French.[83] As a result, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities admits that it needs more accurate data:

"[D]ata that would give us more accurate information on language of instruction at university (by course) would provide a clear idea of the choices individuals make about language and learning at this level. Such data would allow us to better define Francophones' motives for taking courses in one or other of the official languages. Collection of data on learners' linguistic experiences (especially in universities) would allow us to become familiar with the dynamics within so-called bilingual institutions and the individuals attending them."[84]

One possible solution to begin to address the lack of data on Francophones enrolled in postsecondary programs was proposed in the 2005 Rae Report on Education in Ontario. It suggested using the Ontario Education Number (OEN) as a means of gathering data on underrepresented groups. According to this report, the government could consider using this unique identifier assigned to each student from early learning and throughout their academic and training careers because "[t]he benefit would be a very complete and accurate picture of educational pathways, transitions, participation."[85] Other jurisdictions in Canada are currently using a similar system to track students' pathways from early learning through postsecondary studies, although this data would have to be adjusted to include language data. British Colombia, for instance, uses aggregated data from its nine-digit Personal Education Number (PEN) as part of

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[82] Linda Cardinal, François Charbonneau and Tina Desabrais, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.
[83] *Ibid*, pp. 9-10.
[84] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5, p. 94.
[85] Honourable Bob Rae, *Ontario: A Leader in Learning – Report and Recommendations*, Toronto, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2005, p. 61.

that province's education policy planning, including its Official Languages in Education action plan.[86]

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Commissioner recommends that the government use the Ontario Education Number (OEN), linked with linguistics variables, throughout students' academic life, from early learning to postsecondary and beyond. The OEN should also be amended to include language-based questions. This should preferably be based on multiple questions or indicators, rather than a single-factor indicator (e.g., language of instruction OR language of communication OR mother tongue...).

[86] For more information: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/pen/and http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/frenchprograms/agreement/bc_action_plan_(2009-10_to_2012-13).pdf (pages consulted in June 2012).

CHAPTER 4 – THE ISSUE OF GOVERNANCE

Of all the factors which matter to the development and fate of French-language postsecondary education, there is no doubt that governance ranks as one of the most important. For our purposes, governance refers to management and control over the linguistic and cultural aspects of French-language education.[87] It affects all aspects of colleges and universities, from financial matters and institutional policies to curriculum and student and administrative services. Just two out of the five institutions offering French-language programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario are governed by Francophones for Francophones: *Collège Boréal* and *La Cité collégiale*.

According to section 4 of the *Act respecting Université d'Ottawa,* this institution must "*further bilingualism and biculturalism and preserve and develop French culture in Ontario*".[88] Indeed, in 2008 the University of Ottawa created the Standing Committee on Francophone Affairs and Official Languages. Its mandate is to oversee the planning and implementation of initiatives that will help the University fully assume its mission and commitment to promote and develop French culture in Ontario.

The other two institutions – York University's Glendon College and OISE/UT's CRÉFO – are **part of English-language universities and are subject to the mandate and the operational processes of institutions run for and by the linguistic *majority*.** Consequently, Glendon College and CRÉFO's development and direction are driven first and foremost by bottom-line calculations such as enrolment and participation rates to meet the needs of their English-language parent universities, rather than the needs of the community they *also* serve: Francophones and Francophiles.

4.1 GOVERNANCE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

For as long as there has been an education system in Ontario, Francophones have understood the need and struggled for governance by Francophones for Francophones. Compared with postsecondary institutions,[89] which are

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[87] Available online: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/amenagement/ConsultEducation.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).
[88] *Supra* note 41.
[89] According to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities: "Each university has been established by an individual act of the federal or provincial parliament as a private corporation. Universities are independent, autonomous institutions, in which ultimate fiduciary responsibility for the institution rests with its governing board. Many of the province's universities began as

independent and autonomous, primary and secondary schools are governed by the *Education Act*. As a result, efforts by the Francophone community have concentrated on pressuring the government to gain management and control of primary and secondary education systems. Government response to such pressures has varied over time, ranging from indifference to outright suppression as reflected in *Regulation 17*, a government regulation adopted in 1912 that outlawed French-language instruction in public schools in Ontario. Moreover, early legal and constitutional measures such as the separate school board *Scott Act* (1863) and the *British North America Act* (1867) focused on protecting the rights of confessional schools.[90]

Over time — and with unrelenting pressure from the Francophone community — the government eventually became more conciliatory, for instance, by sanctioning French-language public schools at the elementary and secondary levels in 1969. However, the greatest advancement for Franco-Ontarians working to have governance over French-language education was undoubtedly the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), in which linguistic minority education rights were entrenched (section 23). This, along with an important ruling from the Ontario Court of Appeal,[91] forced the government of Ontario to recognize French-language education rights, leading to the creation of the province's first French-language school boards in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[92] By 1998, Franco-Ontarians had secured governance of primary and secondary education systems, tripling the number of French-language school boards across the province. Studies have found that the creation and hence the *supply* of French-language schools has been met by a rapid and steady increase in enrolment in French-language schools, such that it has caught up with, and often surpasses, English-language school enrolment.[93]

In *Mahé* v. *Alberta* (1990), the Supreme Court of Canada clearly articulated the seminal importance of governance in a linguistic minority education context. It linked the vitality of linguistic minority communities and cultures to the right of

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denominational, church-associated universities or colleges, evolving later into secular, publicly assisted educational institutions. Each university has developed its own mission and role and defines its own community." For more information: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/discussi/postdeng.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).

[90] Sophie LeTouzé, *La gestion de l'éducation en milieu minoritaire : Modèles de gestion collaborative entre conseils scolaires*, Ottawa, Centre interdisciplinaire de recherche sur la citoyenneté et les minorités, 2003, p. 11.

[91] *Reference* Re *Education Act of Ontario* and Minority Language Education Rights (1984), 10 D.L.R. (4th) 491.

[92] Sophie LeTouzé, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[93] Normand Frenette and Saeed Quazi, *supra* note 59, p. 6.

parents to have meaningful participation in their children's education, including via representation on school boards. The Court stated:

"Such management and control is vital to ensure that their language and culture flourish. It is necessary because of a variety of management issues in education, e.g. curricula, hiring, expenditures, can affect linguistic and cultural concerns. I think it incontrovertible that the health and survival of the minority language and culture can be affected in subtle but important ways by decisions relating to these issues. [...] Furthermore, as the historical context in which s. 23 was enacted suggests, minority language groups cannot always rely upon the majority to take account of all the linguistic and cultural concerns. Such neglect is not necessarily intentional: the majority cannot be expected to understand and appreciate all of the diverse ways in which education practices may influence the language and culture of the minority."[94]

4.2 GOVERNANCE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

While linguistic minority education rights under the Charter do not encompass postsecondary education,[95] the principle of governance as central to the development of the community and culture nevertheless applies. This view is echoed by the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, which states, "like early childhood education services, postsecondary education is not expressly mentioned in section 23. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that it is an integral part of the education continuum that must make it possible for French-speaking Canada to develop and prosper."[96] The government of Ontario has also recognized the importance of governance to French-language postsecondary education in the province, making it a key strategic objective of the new postsecondary *Politique d'aménagement linguistique* (PAL).[97]

As is the case at the elementary and secondary level of education, every aspect of postsecondary education is affected by governance. And because some French-language campuses/faculties are subject to the governance of English-language institutions, they have limited authority over their finances and program funding. Indeed, this power resides with the English-language postsecondary parent institution — a situation which, in and of itself, has massive ramifications

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[94] *Supra* note 1.
[95] For more information: http://www.documentationcapitale.ca/documents/Giroux.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).
[96] Available online: http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/381/offi/rep/rep06jun05-e.pdf (page consulted in June 2012).
[97] *Supra* note 19, p. 25.

for the fate, development and direction of French-language services and programs. For instance, English-language governance of French-language programs leads to unequal access to student admissions and administrative services for French-language students. Thus, students enrolled in French-language and English-language programs within the same English-language university will have very different experiences in terms of access to student admissions and administrative services. Unlike their Anglophone counterparts, Francophone students will be unable to access unions and clubs, sports and leisure teams, conferences and symposiums in their language of choice and instruction outside the narrow parameters of their programs. Similarly, current and prospective students of French-language programs existing within Anglophone institutional contexts will be unable to access admissions information and administrative assistance in French from faculty and staff beyond that of their program.

In addition to limiting equal access to services, governance by the majority over French-language programs also affects French-language programs and academic curriculum. **Francophone governance is necessary for the protection of existing French-language programs as well as their development.** Drawing on interview data with Francophone administrators of bilingual colleges in Ontario, one study reveals the extent to which French-language programs existing within English-language postsecondary institutions are vulnerable to being cut:

"After the [1982] recession, the provincial government had decreased its level of financial support to the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, and as a result, the colleges attempted to realize economies of scale where possible. This meant eliminating under-subscribed courses and programs. In bilingual institutions, the target was often French[-language] programs and courses since, by definition, the enrolments were lower in number."[98]

This example demonstrates that the fate and direction of French-language programs controlled and managed by English-language institutions are shaped by the conventional logic of supply and demand, which, as studies have shown time and time again, only works effectively in a linguistic *majority* setting. This is because these institutions are accountable to the community they serve, which is the English-language majority. Within this linguistic *majority* context, eliminating French-language programs is seen as a logical response to fiscal constraint. It demonstrates how, in the absence of Francophone management and control of

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[98] Normand Frenette and Saeed Quazi, *supra* note 59, pp. 8-9.

postsecondary institutions, French-language programs are seen as superfluous and expendable. In this example, what may have seemed like 'good business sense' to the Anglophones linguistic majority (eliminating programs based on enrolment rates) would surely have been viewed differently from the vantage point of the Francophone linguistic minority and may have been seen as a further shrinking of an already dwindling and vulnerable French-language postsecondary education system.

Ultimately, Francophone governance gives the Francophone community a sense of attachment and belonging to French-language postsecondary programs and institutions. It creates an obligation to the community that necessarily implies greater participation by the Francophone community in the fate of its postsecondary system. In turn, it also makes French-language colleges and bilingual universities accountable to the communities they serve.

4.3 STRUCTURES OF POSTSECONDARY GOVERNANCE

Effective Francophone governance does not necessarily entail complete autonomy or independence from English-language postsecondary institutions; the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, difference types of governance structures exist, such as affiliations and federations, which make it possible for both French-language and English-language programs to prosper and develop concurrently. Affiliations and federations already exist in Ontario among French-language, English-language and bilingual institutions, such as bilingual Saint Paul University which is federated with the bilingual University of Ottawa, the French-language *Collège de Hearst* affiliated with bilingual Laurentian University, or English-language Catholic King's University College, affiliated with the English-language University of Western Ontario. Affiliated and federated schools operate independently to varying degrees but have agreements with larger, typically more established postsecondary institutions that have some control and management over the policies, standards and programs of their affiliates.

The case of the *Université de Saint-Boniface*, located in the province of Manitoba, suggests that it is possible for a French-language university to flourish within the confines of an affiliation with an English university.[99] Each Ontario federate/affiliate is a legally independent entity, with exclusive authority over its governance. The extent to which a federate/affiliate is subject to any oversight by

[99] For the purposes of this report, the *Université de Saint-Boniface* is referred to as *Saint-Boniface* to avoid confusion about the school's name and status changes over time.

the "parent" university is entirely a matter of agreement between the two institutions (see Appendix A for more details).

French-language colleges and bilingual universities produce future professionals who master both languages and whose labour market activities not only contribute to the provincial economy but also help the government meet its obligations under the *French Language Services Act*. Just like the elementary and secondary education system, the postsecondary education system is of crucial importance to the advancement and persistence of the Franco-Ontarian community and culture. Consequently, it is imperative for the development and success of the French-language postsecondary education system that institutions be managed by Francophones for Francophones to the benefit of the Franco-Ontarian community.

4.4 COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

A central ingredient in the development of resilient, effective governance structures in a linguistic minority setting has been strong, productive collaborative relationships between majority-language and minority-language institutions as well as among minority-language institutions.

One example of the former can be found in the collaborative nature of the relationship between the *Université de Saint-Boniface* and the University of Manitoba. Indeed, their affiliation agreement includes sections which are central to creating a partnership that does not lead to the domination of one institution over the other, but allows for the growth and development of all entities involved. These include:

(a) a section stating *Saint-Boniface's* importance as a French-language institution to the greater linguistic, cultural and economic welfare of Francophones in Manitoba and Canada;
(b) a clause stipulating French as the primary language of the *Université de Saint-Boniface,* not only at the level of teaching but also in its internal administration;
(c) a clause underscoring the individual character of both institutions as well as their autonomy and independence from one another, specifically in matters of governance and administration;
(d) a section outlining the authority of the *Université de Saint-Boniface's* Senate to make decisions concerning academic matters;

(e) a clause granting the affiliated body some leverage in the decision-making of the main governing body: in this case, a voting seat in the University of Manitoba Senate and the right to be nominated on its Committees.[100]

Indeed, the *Université de Saint-Boniface*'s productive and progressive affiliation with the University of Manitoba offers key lessons, which can be drawn upon in the planning and development of French-language postsecondary education policy in Ontario.

In light of the sheer lack of French-language postsecondary options, infrastructure and institutions in Central-Southwestern Ontario, a successful development plan for French-language higher education in this region hinges on strong collaborative relationships between French-language colleges and bilingual universities. An example of such collaboration can be found in the relationship between York University's Glendon College and *La Cité collégiale*. In an effort to expand its programs and increase enrolment, Glendon College is participating in productive collaborative programs with Ottawa-based *La Cité collégiale* in areas such as the communications and journalism program. But, in the end, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for Glendon College to decide on new programs on its own, without first obtaining the necessary permissions from York University, an important and prestigious institution that provides programs and services for the majority and may have a much harder time taking into account the needs of the Franco-Ontarian community. It is important to note, however, that Glendon College's Five-Year Academic Plan contains commitments to enhance enrolment of Francophones.

[100] For more information: http://www.ustboniface.mb.ca/document.doc?id=379 (page consulted in June 2012).

CHAPTER 5 – IMPLICATIONS AND THE NEED FOR INCENTIVES

The lack of French-language postsecondary options has serious repercussions. Not only does this result in an inequality between French-language and English-language students, it also eventually leads to increased assimilation of Francophone students, which in turn has grave consequences for the Francophone community.

5.1 IMPLICATIONS

5.1.1 Inequality

The severe shortage of French-language higher education options is, first and foremost, an issue of inequity. Whether French- or English-speaking, students looking to pursue higher education to build or enhance their careers are preoccupied with making the right decision in terms of choosing a program. Indeed, more often than not, Francophone students are unable to find a program that will allow them to reach their career aspirations. This situation exists either because programs in their discipline are not offered in French or because the French programs that are available are nowhere close to offering the same calibre of services, reputation or campus facilities as English-language colleges and universities. Thus, unlike Anglophone students, Francophone students in Central-Southwestern Ontario face the difficult choice of deciding to pursue postsecondary studies in French, which may mean they may not be able follow their preferred career, *or* to pursue their chosen career at all costs, even if it means abandoning the French educational foundation they have spent years perfecting.[101]

5.1.2 Assimilation

As this report has already shown, although Francophone students would prefer to pursue postsecondary studies in French, a majority eventually decide to abandon French-language instruction and enrol in English-language colleges and universities for various reasons, including access to highly reputable English-language schools closer to their homes that offer a diversity and range of programs and services. This is reflected, for instance, in the number of Franco-

[101] According to section 2 (2) of the *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act*, "the objects of the colleges are to offer a comprehensive program of career-oriented, post-secondary education and training to assist individuals in finding and keeping employment, to meet the needs of employers and the changing work environment and to support the economic and social development of their local and diverse communities."

Ontarians that are enrolled in English-language universities in Central-Southwestern Ontario, as shown in Table 2. Moreover, one should remember that the total number of Francophones attending English-language universities in the region is underestimated in the following table, not only because it is based on a basic self-identification system — i.e., students ticking a box on an admissions form when applying to multiple postsecondary institutions with little explanation about how 'Francophone' is defined or how this information may be used, which suggests many may identify as Anglophone if they are applying to English-language universities — but also because it excludes all those who are not applying directly through the regular admissions channels, as well as data from college admissions. Also, this self-identification system does not permit children of exogamous couples to truly express what they are and the complexity related to a simple question of identity. More and more, young adults consider themselves to be "bilingual" as an identity and not as a personal characteristic.[102] In fact, if they were brought up by one parent who is Anglophone and the other who is Francophone, for them, neither is better than the other. Therefore, being "bilingual" could just prove to be the right answer for them, and this answer is not captured within the self-identification system.

Table 2: French-language students enrolled in English-language universities in Central-Southwestern Ontario (2007-2008)*

UNIVERSITIES	FRANCO-ONTARIANS (No.)
Brock University	87
University of Guelph	161
McMaster University	103
University of Toronto	395
Trent University	40
University of Waterloo	126
University of Western Ontario	156
Wilfred Laurier University	64
Ryerson University	145
University of Ontario Institute of Technology	22
Ontario College of Art and Design University	19
University of Windsor	121
Total:	1439

*Adapted from French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *Document d'orientation de l'éducation en langue française*, Ottawa, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2009, p.149.

In light of such findings, one study concludes:

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[102] Christine Dallaire, "'Not Just Francophones': The Hybridity of Minority Francophone Youths in Canada", in *International Journal of Canadian Studies* (28), 163-199, 2003.

"Regarding the likelihood of pursuing a postsecondary education in French, Francophone communities are concerned that their students often have little choice but to enrol in English-language institutions. Our study confirms that their worries are well-founded. It shows that a significant percentage of Grade 12 students in French-language schools choose to pursue postsecondary studies in Anglophone institutions or in programs offered mainly in English within a bilingual institution... Often attributable to the lack, in certain regions, of Francophone postsecondary institutions or programs offered in French corresponding to students' desired field of study."[103]

Within a linguistic minority setting, where the vitality of a community and its culture are inextricably tied to the preservation of its language, the diversion of Francophone students away from French higher education to English-language studies is a trend that, if left unchecked, could easily lead to assimilation. As Francophones graduate from English-language colleges and universities, it is likely they will enter the labour market as English-language workers. Having been trained and taught in English, they will be unfamiliar, for example, with the French-language equivalents of highly technical or professional terms. It is worth noting that certain French-language programs equip students with a knowledge of technical terms in both French and English to better prepare them for labour market participation. This is the case with a variety of programs at *Collège Boréal*, including Office Administration, Law Clerk, Police Foundations and Veterinary Technician.[104]

Moreover, the impact of assimilation as a result of the lack of French-language postsecondary options goes beyond that of any one student. It affects the entire community and can have long-term consequences because it takes time for postsecondary systems to grow and develop French-language options, and it also takes time to build human capital, grounded in a new generation of students trained and educated in French-language colleges and universities.

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[103] Réal Allard, Rodrigue Landry and Kenneth Deveau, *supra* note 54, p. 131.
[104] *Supra* note 42.

5.1.3 Inefficiencies

The shortage of French-language postsecondary options has implications for the government of Ontario. First, over the years, the government has strengthened its investment in and commitment to the French-language primary and secondary education system. Thus, the fact that Francophone students in the region suddenly abandon French-language education after high school due to the sheer lack of postsecondary options in French has the effect of draining Ontario of the French human capital in which it had originally invested.

Second, this attrition in French-language education at the postsecondary level directly contributes to the persistent lack of French-language professionals in the province who not only contribute to Ontario's labour market in Francophone communities but also offer adequate French-language services on behalf of the government and its agencies. In the long-run, the shortage of French-language postsecondary institutions in Central-Southwestern Ontario impedes the government's ability to effectively and efficiently meet its obligations under the *French Language Services Act*.

5.2 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The government of Ontario has long recognized the importance of education to the vitality and development of the province's Francophone community. Indeed, less than one year ago, the government stated:

"Francophone students of all ages deserve a supportive learning environment that allows them to learn and succeed in their own language. The needs of students must be a priority. The Ontario government recognizes the importance of providing francophone students with a broad range of education and training programs in French through investments in postsecondary education and training that promote excellence in public education."[105]

In light of this, dealing with the shortage of French-language colleges and bilingual universities and programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario should be a priority for the government. This is an especially pressing issue since Central-Southwestern Ontario is home to approximately one third of all Francophones in the province and is the fastest-growing Francophone community but only has a 3% access rate to French-language colleges and universities.

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[105] *Supra* note 19.

The Ministry has been aware of this shortage for several years now.[106] Indeed, *The Gap Study: French-Language and English-Language Postsecondary and Training Systems,* a report produced by the Ministry in 2008, highlighted the extent of the problem:[107]

"In terms of access, there are fewer programs available to Franco-Ontarians who choose to continue their education in French than to Anglophones, and this is true for all regions. [...] It is clear there is a significant shortfall at both the college and university level and in apprenticeship training. Accessibility of postsecondary programs and in particular of higher education in Central and Western regions is one of the biggest challenges facing this sector from the perspective of sustainable development of Ontario's Francophone community."[108]

In light of the central role that language plays in the cultural realm, the government developed a postsecondary education and training *Politique d'aménagement lingusitique* (PAL), which was introduced in 2011. It places emphasis on the need to build French-language postsecondary education and training capacity and increase French-language governance, and it focuses on the need for greater collaboration between French-language colleges and bilingual universities as well as between institutions and the community. The PAL identified the following as its main objective: "to enhance the sustainability of francophone culture. [...] by focusing on strategies for enabling French-language and bilingual institutions to promote and expand the use and knowledge of French and ensure the provision of services in French."[109]

Moreover, since linguistic and cultural skills are increasingly valued and relevant in today's global competitive market, the postsecondary education and training PAL also aims to promote economic and employment opportunities for all Ontarians.[110] Bringing about concrete, decisive action to address the 3% Central-Southwestern French-language postsecondary education access rate would ensure the viability of the Francophone community and enhance economic and employment opportunities for Francophones in the region. Hence, addressing this issue is not only the right thing to do, but it is also perfectly aligned with the government's education priorities.

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[106] Honourable Bob Rae, *supra* note 85, p. 44.
[107] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 5.
[108] *Ibid.*, p. 133.
[109] *Supra* note 19, p. 4.
[110] *Ibid.*

In 2008, the government also increased funding for French-language postsecondary education, including a $20 million investment in Glendon College, naming it the Centre of Excellence for French-language and Bilingual Postsecondary Education in Southern Ontario. This special status is accompanied by an extensive construction project which began in 2010.[111] While this is admirable, more needs to be done to directly address the 3% access rate to French-language colleges and bilingual universities and programs in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

The government of Ontario is currently in a research stage, gathering data and conducting analyses before taking action. In 2010, the Ministry of Education - Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Permanent Task Force on French-Language Continued Learning recommended the creation of an Expert Panel on Postsecondary French-Language Education, which was established in the spring of 2011. The panel's mandate was to advise the Minister "on the most efficient ways to enhance the province's capacity to provide French-language postsecondary education opportunities in Central-Southwestern Ontario."[112] The Expert Panel met throughout the year in 2011. Moreover, the Expert Panel has held focus groups in Toronto, Welland and Windsor for key stakeholders, such as students, community members and other groups. The Expert Panel has also met with partners in the postsecondary education sector. The Expert Panel will submit its report sometime in June 2012.[113]

The Commissioner looks forward to seeing the outcome of these last few years of research and analysis translate into government action, including practical and concrete steps to directly address the very limited access to postsecondary education in Central-Southwestern Ontario.

5.3 CREATING A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE: THE NEED FOR INCENTIVES

Among the many challenges that the Central-Southwestern region faces in terms of the provision of French-language postsecondary options is the fact that colleges and universities are autonomous, independent bodies. In Ontario, each

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[111] One could argue that this investment is a testament to the success of collaboration with York University. However, in the rarest event witnessed, York University has not provided any investment of its own money for this endeavour. Indeed, all funding for the new site came from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

[112] The EDU-TCU Permanent Task Force on French-Language Continued Learning presented its recommendations to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities in a report entitled *Optimal Positioning of French-Language Schools to Ensure the Expansion of French-Language Education in Ontario* in October 2010.

[113] *Ibid.*

university functions independently, informed by its own policies with respect to teaching and admissions, establishes its own programs, and selects its own personnel.[114] As well, each college of applied arts and technology is governed by the *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002* and, under the act, is an agency of the Crown.[115]

Although the Ministry is limited in its ability to influence schools to offer or expand their French-language programs, it has the authority to approve new programs to be recognized for funding and OSAP eligibility. Therefore, the government could consider encouraging colleges and universities to develop French-language programs in a specific region by designing policies that provide direct, clear and significant incentives. While the recent development of a postsecondary PAL was a prime opportunity to implement such an approach, in its present form, the PAL depends on the *voluntary* participation of postsecondary 'partners' that appear to have little incentive to act and over whom the government has no influence over the direction of programs and services.

Indeed, rather than build solid incentive structures, the PAL offers postsecondary institutions a caveat — should they not have a particularly pressing need to make French-language education a priority — which states that 'education partners' may choose to participate or not, depending on their current fiscal reality and their own circumstances. In light of this, it is unclear exactly how the PAL will help Glendon College or CRÉFO, for instance, to expand and improve their French-language program offerings if their parent institutions, York University and the University of Toronto, do not want to invest in such developments.

Another example of existing practices which fail to create the necessary incentives for change results from the lack of data on students and programs of study outlined earlier in this report. For example, the government is currently unable to determine whether students who have identified themselves as 'French' and are enrolled in a French program are taking any, some or all of their courses in French. In other words, it is possible for a self-identified 'French' student enrolled in a French program to finish his or her program without having taken many or in some cases, any, courses in French.

As the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities states, apart from the challenges this poses to policy-makers in trying to determine whether Francophones in the region have adequate French-language postsecondary

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[114] French-Language Education Policy and Programs Branch, *supra* note 70, pp. 149-50.
[115] *Ibid.*

options, "[t]he consequence of a lack of accurate information in this regard are obvious... universities, which receive a fixed amount for the costs associated with offering services in French, have no gain in enhancing their course offering in French when the programs are already designated as being French language."[116]

Actually, there is no financial incentive whatsoever to take on French-language programs and services from any university or college right now. The only way a university could increase its funding is by adding more students to one of its programs. This could hardly be seen as an incentive to increase the number of programs for the Franco-Ontarian community.

In May 2011, the Ministry sent a memo to institutions highlighting its intent to develop a satellite campuses policy and outlining some of the key elements of the new policy. Until the policy is finalized, institutions are urged to exercise prudence before committing resources to activities that could be considered subject to the policy. Activities undertaken without government support that could be considered satellite campus developments will be ineligible for associated enrolment funding as well as future capital funding at these sites.

Thus, in a region like Central-Southwestern Ontario, which is dominated by reputable English-language institutions that may not consider French-language postsecondary education a priority, what is needed is a way to create a favourable climate for change. And one way to do this is by providing education partners with solid, concrete incentives.

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[116] Linda Cardinal, François Charbonneau and Tina Desabrais, *supra* note 78.

CHAPTER 6 – WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

There is an evident inequality for Francophones living in the Central-Southwestern region who want to pursue postsecondary education in French without having to move to other cities such as Ottawa, Sudbury or even out of the province. Since this inequitable situation is not expected to change, and since the number of Francophones in the region is actually increasing, the need for decisive action is quite clear. The question that remains is what to do next and how.

6.1 TOWARD A FRANCO-ONTARIAN UNIVERISTY

The timing for this project is perhaps not the best, but there is a clear need for a Franco-Ontarian university at some point in the future. Francophones in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Manitoba have access to institutions that they can call their own, even though their number is less than half the number of Francophones living in Ontario.[117] Saying this does not take away anything from bilingual universities such as Laurentian University and the University of Ottawa, both enjoying a rich reputation in excellence throughout the country and even internationally.

Franco-Ontarians currently have access to only 36% of postsecondary programs in the Eastern part of the province, 33% in the North and 3% in the Central-Southwestern region. **These facts speak for themselves.**

A Franco-Ontarian university does not necessarily mean new facilities. The Commissioner is quite aware of the difficult fiscal situation that the province is currently facing.

A Franco-Ontarian university should not be created from thin air either. Franco-Ontarians in the Central-Southwestern region have been down that road before with the *Collège des Grands Lacs* experiment. What students want is to interact with others on a campus. Indeed, studying is much more than learning from teachers and textbooks; studying is a learning experience that is best shared with others.

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[117] In 2006, there were 582,690 Francophones in Ontario. For more information: http://www.ofa.gov.on.ca/en/franco.html (page consulted in June 2012).

A Franco-Ontarian university could be the place **where the community is called upon to participate** in deciding which programs should be offered, with the goal of better preparing students and society for the future.

Such a university could create, based on a **transfer credit system**, partnerships with other universities, such as the University of Toronto, Western, McMaster and Waterloo, to name just a few. Indeed, the Commissioner believes that many English-language universities have both the interest and the capacity to offer courses in French or even prepare programs within their own fields of expertise that could respond to the needs of the Franco-Ontarian population. At the moment, this is simply impossible due to a key missing element: an interlocutor. Usually, a university plays the role of a hub where supply meets demand for programs and services. There is no such place within the Central-Southwestern region for the Francophone population.

A new Franco-Ontarian university would create demand by offering programs and services, as explained previously in this report. Moreover, such a university would help meet the goal of **achieving greater differentiation** in Ontario's university sector. The Commissioner wholeheartedly agrees with the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario when it says:

> *For learners, greater differentiation of Ontario's university sector offers clearer choices from a larger number of higher quality programs, clarifies the institutions that best serve their career and personal aspirations, and facilitates mobility and transitions between institutions in Ontario's postsecondary system.*
>
> *For government, greater differentiation of Ontario's university sector is one of the most powerful levers available, especially in times of resource constraints, to achieve public goals of greater quality, competitiveness, accountability and sustainability.*[118]

A Franco-Ontarian university would clearly be different and would finally offer clearer choices, in French — choices that would be different from those offered in other universities' French-language programs. Indeed, **it would not be in anyone's interest to have a new university duplicate programs already offered** in Ottawa or Sudbury, as this would not achieve greater differentiation.

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[118] *Supra* note 77.

A Franco-Ontarian university would also be able to explore discussions on whether **colleges should have a greater role in degree delivery** and the creation of a more effective transfer credit system that would be particularly relevant to the issue of university differentiation.

Of course, **such a university should have a strong base of operation**. There is no debate: a Franco-Ontarian university should not be a virtual one. One possibility would be to have Glendon College play an important role in this project. But important changes within its governance would have to be made before such a solution could be adopted in order for such an approach to be seen as credible. (This point will be discussed further in section 6.2.7.)

Having said all this, the Commissioner is well aware that the Ministry may view this solution as too bold at this point in time. The Commissioner, however, would not be discouraged by such a reaction, but he also believes that this solution's time will eventually come. Franco-Ontarians have been quite patient for the last century or so. They know full well the unwritten policy of taking things one step at the time — the incremental *politique des petits pas* — when it comes to implementing rights for their benefit.

6.2 PUTTING FORWARD IDEAS

The Commissioner is pleased with the creation of an Expert Panel on Postsecondary French-language Education by the Ministry. There are high hopes for this panel, and the Commissioner is satisfied with the selection of members chosen to serve on this body. By the same token, however, the Commissioner is also aware that the mandate of the Expert Panel will not consider any ideas regarding new institutions because of costs related to capital funding, operations and human resources. Also, the Expert Panel will meet with a limited number of groups and institutions. Clearly, for the Commissioner, such an alarming situation requires a more robust and community-based approach. But it seems the Ministry might be reluctant to create false hope when there is already almost none.

6.2.1 Partners, like it or not

As previously stated, there are currently only five postsecondary institutions that offer programs and services in French in the Central-Southwestern region, three of them at university level (York University, the University of Toronto and the University of Ottawa) and the other two at college level (*Collège Boréal* and *La*

Cité collégiale). At the university level, there are only two major institutions that could realistically play an important role, if asked and willing, and they are the University of Ottawa and Laurentian University.

The previously mentioned institutions are the specialists that need to be directly involved. And in the Central-Southwestern region, they would be partners first, competitors second.

The future of Franco-Ontarians is at stake. Now is not the time to be on the sidelines with a proposed plan that will perhaps benefit the community at some point, but will more likely benefit one institution over another. And if everyone attempts to get the largest piece of the pie, in the end, it is the community that loses out. Instead, the Commissioner believes that partnerships are more than relevant and should include allowing colleges to play a greater role in degree delivery.

6.2.2 Involvement of the community

From the outset, there is one important missing piece in this puzzle. Where is the Franco-Ontarian community in all this debate? Could they or, better yet, should they be part of the solution as well? The answer to this last question is yes. Indeed, the Commissioner believes that without the full involvement of the Franco-Ontario community, any solution put forward may be in peril from the get-go.

A possible scenario would be to conduct an extensive consultation process with Francophones living in the Central-Southwestern region. Such a process would have the benefit of being democratic. But it could also have the effect of prolonging the issue much further, without necessarily achieving a common approach at the end of the day.

Another scenario would be to focus on selected groups of stakeholders. The word community can encompass a rather large group of people or associations and institutions alike. When dealing with such an issue, one should refer to stakeholders that can actually provide relevant insights as to the needs of the Franco-Ontarian community, where and how should those needs should be met and with what kind of programs and services.

Stakeholders could include:

- Professionals in the education domain
- Administrators in the education sector
- School board professionals or administrators
- Community organizations and members of the public
- Students
- University and college administrators or professionals
- Chamber of commerce and other business leaders
- Public officials from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

6.2.3 Different strategies for different clienteles

Since clienteles of colleges and universities are sometimes quite different, it would make sense to develop different approaches for each. That might very well be the sensible thing to do in order to proceed.

But Francophones in Central-Southwestern are in an awkward situation. Important postsecondary institutions must come together with the community in order to come up with tailored solutions for the region.

6.2.4 Different phases needed

In any event, it is quite clear that any significant change will require investments in capital funding, operations and human resources. However, in view of the current fiscal situation of the province, it may be wiser to consider setting goals for different phases of implementation.

Indeed, although the situation in the Southwestern region is undeniably critical for Francophones living in the region, the Commissioner believes it would be somewhat unrealistic to call for solutions in Southwestern Ontario without having implemented one in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). This would be the starting point. A strong solution is what is needed — along with an equally strong will by all participants to implement it in the GTA — to benefit the Southwestern region in the medium term.

6.2.5 Funding issues

During the course of this investigation, it became quite clear that if a solution to the critical inequality facing Francophones in Central-Southwestern Ontario were

to be found, one would have to look deeply into the funding formula for colleges and universities.

Of course, there are many opinions regarding this matter, almost as many as the number of colleges and universities and other sensible organisations such as the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. And although the Commissioner is keenly interested in this topic, it exceeds the scope of the current investigation.

6.2.6 A new structure

As mentioned previously, bringing education partners, the community and stakeholders together to work for the benefit of the Franco-Ontarian population of the Central-Southwestern region could prove to be a challenge.

Indeed, there must be an incentive for them to do so.

For community organizations, the benefits would be quite obvious, i.e., the possibility of pursuing postsecondary education in French — by and for Francophones, if possible — tailored to fit the needs of the Central-Southwestern Franco-Ontarian population.

For the chambers of commerce and other business leaders, there is an evident need for new, fully bilingual professionals with college and/or university degrees to work in various businesses and industries.

For both the Catholic and the public French school boards, there would be several incentives. Their students would not only be able to pursue their studies in French at the postsecondary level, but it would also provide a strong argument for parents hesitating to continue sending their children to French schools after Grade 8.

For the administrators of postsecondary institutions, incentives must be provided in two key areas: funding and new campuses. As funding is currently allocated on a per capita basis, it will be difficult if funding issues are not explored. Also, if a solution is to include the participation of other universities or colleges that are not currently within the Central-Southwestern region, then the current moratorium on new campuses will also have to be discussed. These are extremely complex issues with wide-ranging ramifications that, as the Commissioner has mentioned, go beyond the scope of this investigation.

For postsecondary students, incentives are simple: access to relevant, high-quality education in French without necessarily having to move into another major city within Ontario or to another province.

For the Ministry, the incentives are clear. It must ensure that progress is being made, results are achieved and accountability is respected. The Ministry's participation and commitment are absolutely vital for the success of any endeavour.

So, how does one bring all those stakeholders together at the same table and convince them to work together collaboratively towards the common goal of achieving tangible results?

One possible answer is that a new structure needs to be put in place by the Ministry. Not an internal one within the Ministry, but an external structure. Call it a council, a secretariat or any other name appropriate for the task ahead. Its mandate would be to (i) identify the needs in terms of postsecondary programs and services, (ii) identify who could deliver these new programs and services, and (iii) negotiate with postsecondary institutions on how and where best to implement these programs and services in the GTA. The main goal of this new secretariat would be to ensure that the obvious inequity for Franco-Ontarians unable to study in French at the postsecondary level in the Central-Southwestern region is redressed, and that its first priority would be to focus on the GTA. Indeed, there is currently a 97% gap in access rates for Francophones in the Greater Toronto Area. Thus, one possible objective for the future secretariat could be to reduce the gap to 80% in the first five years of its mandate.

The mandate of the new secretariat could also include finding ways for a Franco-Ontarian university to best achieve differentiation with other postsecondary institutions in the GTA and the Central-Southwestern region. For instance, would the community be best served by co-op programs or by traditional courses? Would there be bilingual courses? These choices could be made by the new secretariat.

As for the **composition** of this secretariat, one could imagine a discussion table, or **consortium**, where all postsecondary institutions interested in providing programs and services for the Franco-Ontarian population in the GTA would come together. The Commissioner hopes the five aforementioned institutions would participate in such a consortium.

But they would need to be counterbalanced by a **board of directors** comprised of people from community organizations, Ministry officials and key stakeholders, as listed previously, except, of course, university and college administrators or professionals, because they would already be at the consortium table. **This board of directors is essential so it would be clear that future programs and services would be tailored to the needs of the Franco-Ontarian community.** There would be no dumping of programs and services from existing postsecondary institutions.

Finally, the new secretariat would be headed by a high-ranking official with a small staff. And it would have sufficient powers to be able to fully negotiate agreements with existing postsecondary institutions to help provide the best French-language postsecondary education options for students and therefore the best outcomes for the Franco-Ontarian community.

Some postsecondary institutions may choose not to participate in such a structure for various reasons, possibly because they may feel that they must focus strictly on their own development plans. According to the Commissioner, this would be a wrongheaded approach. Indeed, the Commissioner believes that the current situation requires everyone to pull in the same direction to find a solution to redress an inequitable situation that is unacceptable. Indeed, it is a situation that requires a dramatic reversal.

And while at the end of the day, no one will force a postsecondary institution to follow a path it does not want to choose, if a future secretariat mandated to address the limited access to French-language postsecondary education in the Central-Southwestern regions is to be successful, it needs to have sufficient powers and clout and be able to create, with the government's help, sufficient incentives for postsecondary institutions to be a part of the solution.

In short, the Commissioner recognizes the multiple changes that must be addressed: (i) there is a need for an entity that would best represent the interests of the Franco-Ontarian population, and possibly the interests of Francophiles, especially in the Central-Southwestern region at the postsecondary level; (ii) this entity would have the mandate to find and put into place solutions to the endemic problem of the lack of French-language postsecondary options while coordinating the influx of programs already available across the provinces, if need be; (iii) this entity could take different shapes and forms. The Commissioner believes the best scenario would be a Franco-Ontarian university. Considering the present fiscal situation, the Commissioner firmly believes the next best thing would be to

create an entity on a smaller scale, with specific goals and the ability to put forward and implement new solutions.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The Commissioner recommends that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities creates, by March 31, 2013, a new secretariat or a similar structure to identify the need for postsecondary programs and services for the Franco-Ontarian population in Central-Southwestern Ontario, especially in the Greater Toronto Area.

The Commissioner further recommends that this new structure have the ability to negotiate with postsecondary institutions in order to facilitate the implementation of new programs and services for the Franco-Ontario population in the Central-Southwestern region, starting in the Greater Toronto Area.

Furthermore, the Commissioner recommends that this new structure include representation from the following non-exhaustive list:

- ***Professionals in the education domain***
- ***Administrators in education sector***
- ***School board professionals or administrators***
- ***Community organizations and members of the public***
- ***Students***
- ***University and college administrators or professionals***
- ***Chambers of commerce and other business leaders***
- ***Public officials from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities***

6.2.7 Glendon College's unique situation

Undeniably, Glendon College should be a key player, as the Commissioner has stated before. Glendon College is a truly bilingual university. Services are already offered in both English and French. And the students at Glendon College are highly encouraged to learn or to improve their skills in the other official language. Indeed, the Commissioner has found that the principal and his staff are fully

committed to ensure a viable and strong presence within the Franco-Ontarian community.

But is this commitment enough? Goodwill can go a long way, no doubt. York University has already made some significant and positive changes within the administration of Glendon College. For example, Glendon is now in charge of the administration of all applications to its faculty. It may seem ordinary, but at least students can now apply to Glendon College in French!

The problem resides in the fact Glendon College is just another faculty of York University, albeit an important one. It offers about 3% of all programs available at York University. It has no real decision-making power and cannot make any long-term commitments with anyone, let alone develop new programs, without first asking permission from York University.

As a result, Glendon would not be able to fully participate in any consortium under its current structure of governance. And if the question of governance is not addressed, one shouldn't expect York University to fully comprehend the scope of what needs to be accomplished for the benefit of the Franco-Ontarian population. The Commissioner understands that it is rather difficult to ask a university to invest in the future of a community that is not its main targeted clientele.

Thus, for Glendon to play a greater role, it must first acquire a new autonomy status, become affiliated or be declared fully autonomous by an act of the Legislative Assembly.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

The Commissioner recommends that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities take all necessary measures, by March 31, 2013, in order to negotiate with York University greater autonomy for Glendon College, so that this university campus could serve as a potential base for new postsecondary programs and services aimed at the Franco-Ontarian population of the Central-Southwestern region.

CONCLUSION

French-language postsecondary education is more than French-language instruction or curriculum. Within a French-language minority setting, it protects and transmits the French language and culture, which are necessary for the sustainability of the Franco-Ontarian community. Colleges and universities are an integral part of the educational continuum. They play an important role in developing the community by producing future French-speaking leaders, nurses, doctors and technicians, business owners and investors, and others who contribute to the well-being of the province's population and the competitiveness of its economy. And in a French-language minority context, it also offers primary and secondary students and their parents an incentive to commit to French-language education right from the start.

In this Age of Acceleration in which the pace of change is a challenge in itself, education plays a pivotal role in the economic development and competitiveness of Ontario and Ontarians.[119] Unfortunately, French-language postsecondary education in Central-Southwestern Ontario has not been able to keep up with this rapid pace of change and its students are being left behind. According to the Commissioner, this is unacceptable. Indeed, these students want to learn, they want to excel, they want to work and they are in a prime position to compete, but their desire is to be given the opportunity to do so in French.

The consequences of this French-language education deficit are being felt today not only by the thousands of individuals in Central-Southwestern Ontario who wish to pursue higher education in French — ranging from French-language and immersion students to Francophiles and allophones who speak French — but also by Ontarian society, rendering it increasingly unable to provide equivalent French-language services due to a lack of bilingual and French-speaking professionals. And this situation will also have negative consequences for future generations of Francophone and Francophile students who are unable to enrol in postsecondary education programs close to home and may begin to view French-language studies in primary and elementary school as a futile exercise, one that will eventually lead to a fork in the road where a student must decide between enrolling in an English-language college or university, or relocating and incurring debt. And as this report has shown, the resulting choices made by students discouraged by the lack of postsecondary education options in French

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[119] For more information: http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/study/international/resources.html (consulted in June 2012).

leads to a steady march towards assimilation. It also represents a giant step backwards in a race that is already moving at a challenging pace.

But it is not too late to catch up.

Thus, the French Language Services Commissioner recommends that the government pay serious attention to the lack of French-language postsecondary options in Central-Southwestern Ontario and view this serious problem as an *opportunity*. Indeed, the Francophone population is growing at a rapid pace in the region, and its critical mass is largely sufficient to support new French-language postsecondary programs and services. And the Commissioner proposes a course of action that takes into account the need to bring in greater efficiencies and make fiscally prudent investments.

To that end, the Commissioner recommends that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities design an 'action plan' that is grounded in a vision of French-language postsecondary education that includes *all* learners, including French-language and immersion school graduates, Francophones from exogamous and allophone households, as well as Francophiles who speak French. The Commissioner's recommendations in this report also deal with finding ways to gather additional data on demand and potential demand for French-language postsecondary studies in the region, including improving and broadening data collection methods and indicators, and extending an amended version of the Ontario Education Number (OEN) from early learning through to the postsecondary level, to include language indicators. However, the relationship between demand and supply must be understood within the special context of a linguistic minority. Ultimately, as this report has shown, the lack of data poses a serious problem in determining and addressing the need for French-language postsecondary education in a meaningful way.

It is beyond the mandate of the Commissioner's Office to propose a specific recipe for success in postsecondary education. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is already undertaking important research, analysis and consultations about the future of French-language postsecondary options in Central-Southwestern Ontario, and the government should draw on this research to inform its decisions about how to move ahead.

However, it *is* within the Commissioner's mandate to make recommendations, and thus, in this capacity, the Commissioner recommends that the government design an action plan that would introduce incremental steps. The first of these

steps would be to draw on the infrastructure and resources that already exist in the region, in keeping with the notion of moving forward while maintaining efficiency and fiscal prudence. Accordingly, the Commissioner proposes that this action plan start with a focus on Toronto and specifically on Glendon College. But for Glendon College to play a greater role, it needs to be given more autonomy in terms of programs and services aimed at the Franco-Ontarian community.

Finally, a new structure needs to be put into place to address this most pressing situation for the Francophone community. The Commissioner suggests that it could be a secretariat or a similar structure under another name. The new structure would be composed of people from the community and key stakeholders and would have the ability to deal with other postsecondary institutions in order to find and develop programs tailored for the Franco-Ontarian population of Central-Southwestern region, beginning with the Greater Toronto Area.

Appendix A – The case of the *Université de Saint-Boniface*

Originally founded in 1818, the *Université de Saint-Boniface* is affiliated with the English-language University of Manitoba and offers university programs, technical and professional training as well as continuing education. Students enrolled in *Saint-Boniface* can take courses at the University of Manitoba and vice-versa. *Saint-Boniface*'s historical legacy plays a significant role in explaining its strong affiliation with the University of Manitoba. Indeed, it was one of the University of Manitoba's founding colleges in 1877 and was the first postsecondary educational institution in Western Canada.[120]

It took many years for *Saint-Boniface* to become established, develop and gain university status. Often, developments took place *de facto* before they were formalized *de jure*. This is the case, for instance, in terms of the administrative autonomy that this university increasingly enjoyed between its 1972 and 2005 affiliation agreements with the University of Manitoba. The most recent agreement, from 2008, replaced most of the archaic language previously found in previous agreements, allowed for a more efficient course and program approval process, and enabled *Saint-Boniface* to be more actively involved in the University of Manitoba Senate.

For instance, while *Saint-Boniface*'s Senate (*Conseil de direction des études*) was essentially a sub-faculty under the 2008 agreement, it became the final authority regarding all that pertains to internal matters, sending its recommendations directly to the University of Manitoba Senate for approval. The 2008 agreement also authorizes the president of *Saint-Boniface* to serve as a voting member in the University of Manitoba Senate, and be nominated to serve on Senate committees. Additionally, an assessor from *Saint-Boniface* may also be part of the Senate.

The current agreement between *Saint-Boniface* and the University of Manitoba specifically notes the independent and autonomous character of each institution. Each has exclusive jurisdiction over its own governance and administration, including the hiring of personnel, financial matters, as well as the general

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[120] *Saint-Boniface* was originally known as the *Collège de Saint-Boniface* and was incorporated as such in 1871. In 2005, it became known as *Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface*. It was only in 2011, with the adoption of Bill 26 (*The Université de Saint-Boniface Act*, S.M. 2011, c. 16), that the *Collège* was granted 'university' status under the name *Université de Saint-Boniface*. In effect, this change had little impact on the 2008 affiliation agreement between the *Université de Saint-Boniface* and the University of Manitoba. For more information: http://www.ustboniface.mb.ca/page.aspx?pid=439 (page consulted in June 2012).

structure and rules necessary for the proper functioning and development of its institutions.